漫画人

MANGAJIN

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POP CULTURE
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LEARNING

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back to the BASICS

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Back in 1993, we compiled those popular *Basic Japanese* columns from the first 24 issues in book form, and called it *Basic Japanese Through Comics*. Thousands of readers have found it to be a wonderfully entertaining way to gain greater cultural and linguistic insights. It has proved popular with business people as well as students and teachers—fans range from hard-core Japanophiles to those whose interest is only casual.

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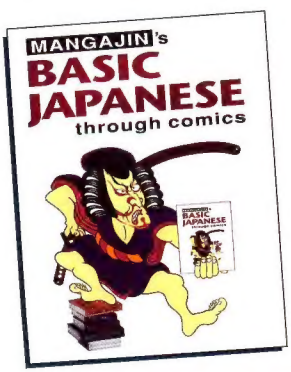

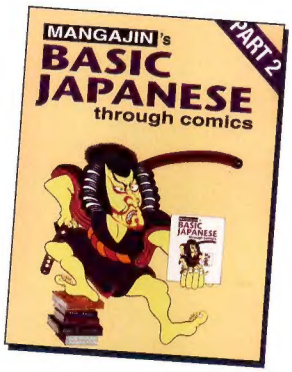

Part 2 picks up where *Part 1* left off, bringing you all the *Basic Japanese* columns from issues No. 25-48 of *Mangajin* magazine. If you liked *Part 1*, here's your chance to get even more of *Mangajin*'s unique presentation of Japanese language and culture.

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Mangajin is a made-up word combining *manga* ("comics/cartoons") and *jin* ("person/people"). It sounds almost like the English word "magazine" as rendered in Japanese—*magajin*. All of the Japanese manga in *Mangajin* were created in Japan, by Japanese cartoonists, for Japanese readers.

Businessman 1: *Na,naiii!?*
"Wha,whaat!?"

Businessman 2: *Tanoshimi ni shiteta terebibangumi ga kyanseru ni natta dakeda.*
"It's just that the TVprogram he was looking forward to got cancelled."

FX: *GAAAN*
(an FX word indicating shock or realization)

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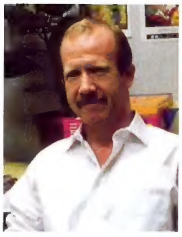

You will notice that there is no Computer Corner in this issue of *Mangajin*. For some this may be cause for rejoicing, but apparently the majority of our readers consider *Mangajin* an important source of information about what is going on in the world of Japanese computing. Thanks to the Internet, there is a solution that should please everyone.

We recently received a submission explaining how to handle Japanese e-mail using standard English software. It looked interesting, but was a little too long for the space usually allocated to the Computer Corner. This seemed to be an ideal way to make use of our new Web Site (`http://www.mangajin.com`), and the piece is now posted there. It covers only Macintosh computers, but we have linked it to another site that gives even more information for those with IBM-type PCs.

If you're wondering what in the world an article like "What in the World is Going on with the Japanese Economy" (p. 70) is doing in a magazine like *Mangajin*, let me comment briefly.

Over half of our readers are business and technical professionals, but even for the students and teachers out there, we felt that this piece gave a highly readable explanation of a subject that anyone involved in Japan would find of interest.

Back in 1991 one of my favorite magazines, *Business Tokyo*, ceased publication, and now it seems that *Tokyo Business Today* has also thrown in the *o-shibori*. Although it's not really a business magazine, *PHP Intersect*, which occasionally ran this kind of piece, is changing its name to *Impact 21*, and shifting to more of a general Asian focus rather than being Japan-specific. We felt that there was a void developing, and although *Mangajin* will always base its identity on manga, there does seem to be a case for expanding the boundaries of "pop culture" beyond our current limits.

Coming Up in Issue No. 56

Japanese Restaurants in the US: Japanese restaurants in the US are becoming more authentic, and in some cases going *beyond* authentic.

Japan's Top 10 Hits: *Billboard* correspondent Steve McClure reports on the songs and groups at the top of the charts in Japan.

Pitfalls of Japanese Desktop Publishing: Service bureau operator Andy Taylor gives suggestions on how to clean up your DTP act.

Manga

- *Kochira . . .*: Bumbling police officer Ryōtsu takes on the future by agreeing to become a guinea pig for a new hypermedia briefcase.
- *Aji Ichimonme*: A young chef-in-training visits a sushi shop that leaves a bad taste in his mouth.

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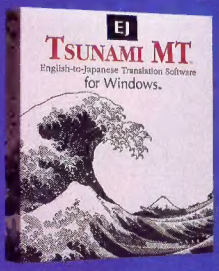

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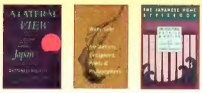

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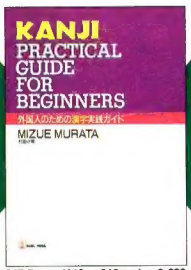

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Ticked at translation

Many of us depend upon *Mangajin* for vocabulary and idiom. When you translate as loosely as you did the *rakugo* in issue No. 49 [Danshi Tatekawa's "The Wallet"], you become not an asset but a liability. Another good example would be volume 50, page 104, where "*Ikenai ko ne*" is translated as "Don't tease your sister." The Japanese includes nothing that would indicate this. "Naughty child!" would be closer, and so easy to have done. This one was obvious, but in the rakugo it was a lot tougher to recognize where your translation strayed from the original.

TERRY L. DAVIS
Woodbury, MN

It's a constant struggle to decide how best to translate the sentences that appear in Mangajin. *If the translation is too literal, then the meaning is obscured; if it is too loose, then the language-learning value is decreased. Over the years we have added various devices to the manga translations in hopes of pleasing readers on both sides of the fence. One of these is the four-line manga format, which provides the original Japanese, a romaji transliteration, a word-for-word literal translation, and a final translation. Occasionally, we even provide an intermediate final translation to bridge the gap between the word-for-word and a loose final translation. That might have been helpful in the example you cite, but we didn't judge it necessary since the word order was merely reversed.*

The rakugo translation, as we pointed out at the time, was a special case in which we felt it was more important to convey the humor of Danshi's story than to be completely faithful to the original. It's true that this one was best suited to our often neglected advanced readers.

Pop tops

Though I'm not (yet) a big fan of Japanese pop music, some of the songs I hear are kind of catchy, and it seems to me a "popular song" column would be a natural item to include in a magazine of "Japanese Pop Culture and Language Learning." Songs can be a great language-learning tool (I know several Japanese who have learned English through listening to the Beatles), and a column introducing a popular Japanese musician or music group (along with a hit song) would be a great conversation starter with Japanese students and friends. Of course, knowing more Japanese songs would make the karaoke experience more enjoyable, too.

MATTHEW HOWELL
Niigata, Japan

We are always interested in hearing suggestions from our readers, just as we are interested in hearing about something that might make the karaoke experience more enjoyable. We'll look into your suggestion, and we encourage others to send theirs in as well.

漫

Websites of the moment

Many of *Mangajin*'s covers imitate the style of famous *ukiyoe* prints. *Ukiyoe* (literally, "pictures of the floating world") are woodblock prints depicting scenes from life in the Edo period (1600-1868). A common theme is portraits of kabuki actors, geisha, courtesans, and other denizens of the Tokyo entertainment world.

Jim Breen, a professor of Digital Systems at Australia's Monash University, has an online gallery presenting many of the more famous ukiyoe prints:

http://
www.rdt.monash.edu.au/
~jwb/ukiyoe/ukiyoe.html

Another site, maintained by Hans Olaf Johansson, provides all sorts of ukiyoe links, including dealers:

http://www.bahnhof.se/
~secutor/ukiyo-e/

bloopers

Gojūnotō gaffe

Learning words by vocabulary list can lead to great embarrassment! When we lived in Japan in the early 1960s, my whole family took Japanese language classes at Yokosuka Navy Base using the US Army's *Japanese with Pictures* books. My mother tried some new vocabulary during an excursion near Tokyo with a Japanese admiral and his wife. In commenting on a passing temple, she said, "What a lovely *gofujō*," and then wondered why her Japanese friends were trying so hard not to laugh. To her horror, she realized she had used a coarse word for lavatory, *gofujō*, when she had meant to say *gojūnotō*, a five-story pagoda. Unfortunately, we had learned the words one after the other in *Japanese with Pictures, Part II*.

Patricia J. Graboske
Rockville, MD

Miss Disagreeable

Even native speakers make language bloopers! At one of the Japanese primary schools that I visit on my job as an assistant language teacher (ALT), a young student entered the teacher's room and loudly stated his business. The problem was, he mixed up the syllables of Yanada-sensei's name. The boy ended up telling the amused staff that he was there to see Y*adana*-sensei ("offensive/disagreeable" teacher). It's a good thing Ms. Yanada has a good sense of humor.

Kyle Hedlund
Aomori-ken, Japan

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うどんですかい
Udon de Sukai
Udon de Sky

In an effort to please the palates of its internationally bound Executive Class passengers—i.e., Japanese businessmen who sink into deep depression at the prospect of several days running without a Japanese meal—Japan Airlines has announced a new in-flight snack: Udon de Sky.

Udon, a thick, white noodle served in a soy-sauce-flavored broth, is ubiquitous in Japan, both in restaurants and on convenience store shelves as prepackaged instant noodles. Udon de Sky is JAL's version of the instant variety, specially designed to cook at the lower boiling point in the plane cabin.

Udon de Sky is also a trilingual pun, combining Japanese (*udon*), French (*de*, a particle meaning "of") and English (sky). In other words, don't think for a minute that JAL is just serving you some plain old cup-o-noodles; these noodles are *un petit chic*, they are *kokusaiteki* (国際的, "cosmopolitan")—they are Noodles of the Sky.

When written in hiragana (うどんですかい), as it is near the top of the package, Udon de Sky becomes *Udon desu kai*, a perfectly acceptable Japanese sentence that means "Is it udon?" or "You mean udon?" (*kai* is a colloquial variant of the question particle *ka*). A surprised and gratified *"Udon desu kai"* is presumably the reaction JAL expects from its travel-weary passengers when they are offered this familiar favorite so many long miles from home.

Thanks to Matthew Pakos
New York, NY

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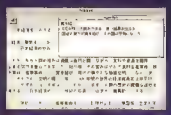

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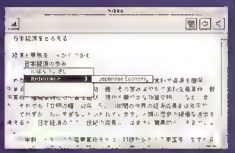

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日本語を
Nihongo o
試した旅行者
tameshita ryokōsha
韓国人
Kankokujin

- *tamesu* (試す) means "try/try out."
- *ryokō* (旅行) means "travel/a trip"; adding the suffix *sha* (者, "person") makes it "traveler/tourist."
- a country name plus the suffix *jin* (人, "person") indicates a person from that country; *Kankoku* = "(South) Korea" so *Kankokujin* = "Korean."

- *nure-ochiba* ("wet fallen leaves") is an unflattering term used in reference to retired husbands who have nothing to do but sit around clinging to their wives like a wet leaf clinging to a shoe.
- *koyashi* is "fertilizer," *futoru* means "get fat," and *ni* here is like "via" or "through"; *nure-ochiba (no) koyashi ni futoru* is a complete thought/sentence ("[she] gets fat via/through the fertilizer of wet fallen leaves") modifying *uba-zakura*.
- *uba-zakura* ("old cherry tree") can also mean "old woman"; the gist of this poem is that although they complain about their useless retired husbands, old women actually seem to thrive with their husbands at home—like old cherry trees being fertilized.

濡れ落ち葉
Nure-ochiba
肥やしに太る
koyashi ni futoru
うば桜
uba-zakura

Wet fallen leaves— compost for the old cherry tree.

by 芳樹、群馬
"Fragrant Tree," Gunma

---

by 赤堀順, 神奈川
Akabori Jun, Kanagawa

アメリカへ
Amerika e
ラブレター出す
rabu retā dasu
切手入れ
kitte-ire

Sending a love letter to America— return postage enclosed.

- *Amerika* is a katakana rendering of "America", it is always used in reference to the US.
- *rabu retā* is a katakana rendering of "love letter"; *rabu retā (o) dasu* is "send/post a love letter."
- a noun plus the suffix *-ire* (入れ, from *ireru* (入れる, "insert/enclose"), means "~ enclosed"; *kitte-ire* = "stamps enclosed."

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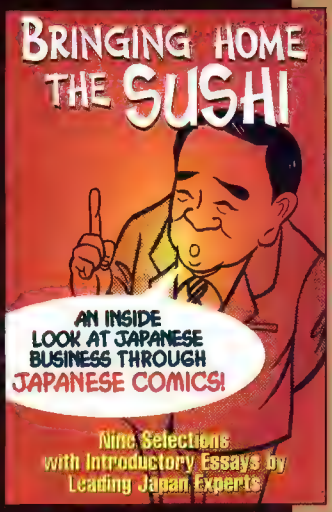
BRINGING HOME THE SUSHI
AN INSIDE LOOK AT JAPANESE BUSINESS THROUGH JAPANESE COMICS!
Nine Selections with Introductory Essays by Leading Japan Experts

BRINGING HOME THE SUSHI

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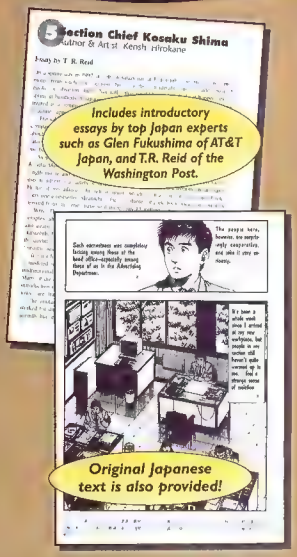
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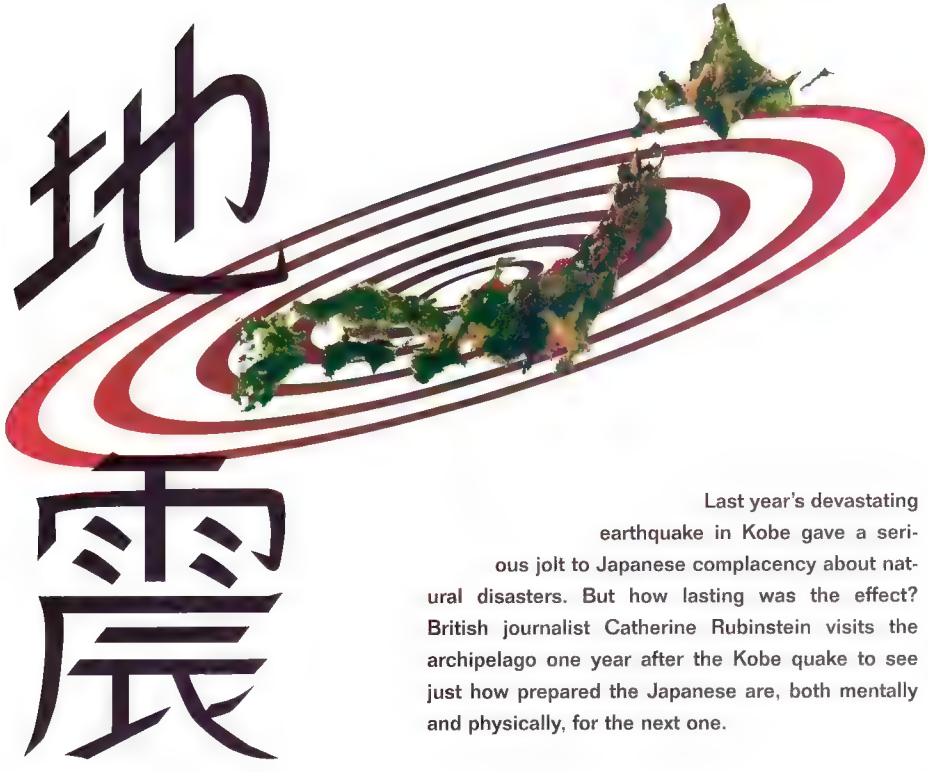
Living with Earthquakes

By Catherine Rubinstein



Last year's devastating earthquake in Kobe gave a serious jolt to Japanese complacency about natural disasters. But how lasting was the effect? British journalist Catherine Rubinstein visits the archipelago one year after the Kobe quake to see just how prepared the Japanese are, both mentally and physically, for the next one.

"This was my parents' house." Morikuri Shigekazu gestures toward heaps of soil and rubble. He pauses a moment, then bends to pick up a muddy playing card from among porcelain shards. "I remember these. I used to play with them when I was a child," he says quietly.

Morikuri is standing on a steep hillside overlooking Nagata, the old area of Kobe that was worst affected by the earthquake and fires of January 1995. In front of him is a wide expanse of bare ground, with scattered chunks of broken walls and shop signs. Here and there a tiny hut stands defiant. To one side is a newly rebuilt apartment block, uninhabited because its old tenants can't afford the new rent. To the other is a school, whose swimming pool could have been used to help put out the fires had anyone been able to get in. Over a year has passed since the quake, but much of Kobe is still devastated; empty, condemned buildings lean perilously while arguments rage as to who pays for demolition—let alone rebuilding—and 100,000 people still live in "temporary" prefab housing camps.

Morikuri was lucky. An urban ethnographer at Osaka University of Foreign Studies, he had moved out of Nagata into the suburbs some years ago. Immediately after the quake, he returned to find his mother. "There were cracks in the road, black smoke in the sky, and the road through the mountains was clogged with cars on similar missions," he remembers. Nagata was eerily silent, the only sound the crackle of fires, but Morikuri's mother was unharmed. Grateful, and feeling guilty about his easy escape, he began to help with reconstruction work. Now, along with 19 other Kobeites from different walks of life, he has formed a traveling troupe whose mission is to tell the rest of Japan what it is like to live through an earthquake.

But surely the Japanese know all too well about earthquakes. Around 10 percent of the world's total occur in Japan—more than 1,000 earthquakes each year large enough to be detected by people. The country is located where four of the Earth's tectonic plates meet, like giant subterranean sumo wrestlers joining battle shoulder to shoulder; each time one of those plates jolts forward, part of Japan shudders. The main movements are along the major fault lines between tectonic plates, but some also occur along the numerous minor faults running above and between them.

The vast majority of tremors, of course, are small, centered far out to sea, or deep underground and no more disruptive to people's lives than a passing truck. The worst that most Japanese alive today have suffered is shaking violent enough to topple ornaments and books or perhaps a few pieces of unanchored furniture. However, according to Peter Hadfield, author of *Sixty Seconds That Will Change the World: The Coming Tokyo Earthquake*, even a medium-size quake can be unnerving: "The normal order of things becomes reversed—the people stay still, watching and waiting and stricken with fear, while the solid earth moves and heaves."

Every Japanese knows, too, about the Great Kantō Earthquake, which struck the Tokyo-Yokohama area in 1923, resulting in 140,000 deaths (almost double the initial number of people killed by the Hiroshima atom bomb). Around 50,000 of these were due not to the quake itself but to the fires that followed, engulfing the old wooden city. Horrific tales abound of spirals of flame and wind plucking unlucky victims from the crowds and dropping them in balls of fire, while others were being boiled alive in rivers or trapped in molten tarmac.

That quake has become the benchmark, the dreaded Big One which popular mythology—counter to recent scientific evidence—expects to recur regularly every 70 years or so. And the next Big One, people feel, will be so bad that no one can do anything about it. For some, the Big One refers to the next Tokyo quake; for others it means a more imminent tremor along the coast near Shizuoka. Either way, to think only of the Big One is misleading: cities such as Tokyo can expect to be affected both by ripples from major quakes centered farther away along the main faults and by localized *chokka-gata* (直下型, "directly underneath type") quakes that could occur along minor fault lines almost anywhere. Neither

© Catherine Robinson

In the foreground is the area where the home of Morikuri Shigekazu's parents stood before the Kobe earthquake. Behind are houses that miraculously survived the quake. Condemned for over a year, they still await demolition.

• complacency = (ひとりよがりの) 安心感 *(hitoriyogari no) anshin-kan* • porcelain = 磁器 *jiki* • shards = (陶磁器などの) 破片 *(tojiki nado no) hahen* • hut = 小屋 *koya* • rage = 沸騰する *futto suru* • ethnographer = 民族学者 *minzoku-gakusha* • troupe = 劇団／一座 *gekidan/ichiza* • tectonic plate = 地殻のプレート *chikaku no purēto* • tremor = 震動　地震 *shindō/jishin* • topple = 倒す／落下させる *taosu/rakka saseru* • molten tarmac = 熱で溶けたアスファルト *netsu de toketa asufaruto*

Photos courtesy of the Ikebukuro Citizens' Life Safety Center

The family at right huddles under a table during a simulated earthquake at the Citizens' Life Safety Center (防災館, *bōsaikan*) in Ikebukuro, one of three such centers in Tokyo. The centers also teach skills like operating a fire extinguisher (above).

would be as devastating as the 1923 quake, but even a localized *chokka-gata* could cause serious damage if it occurred near the surface beneath an urban center -as in Kobe.

Nonetheless, most Japanese pay little attention to the quake threat in their day-to-day lives, in either practical or psychological terms. Forced to think about it, the general response is a fatalistic if nervous shrug and an escapist change of topic—a national tendency to bury one's head in the sand, however shaky that sand may be.

In an earthquake-prone country like Japan, one would expect the threat of quakes to impinge on many details of daily life. It should be second nature, for instance, not to put anything fragile near the edge of a shelf where it could easily fall and to keep valuables together in one place where they would be easy to grab if one had to run for it. But people have become blasé. Horizontal space is at such a premium that Japanese homes and offices are crammed with clutter: bookcases are double stacked, crockery piles up on shelves, the newest TV or computer sits next to last year's model, both perched precariously on a narrow, space-saving table—and earthquakes are all but forgotten.

Official advice is to bolt furniture firmly to walls and ceilings; to make sure you know the local "evacuation area" to head for after a quake (a school or park with emergency provisions—in Tokyo, each locality sprouts numerous maps showing their location); to stock up on three days' worth of food and water; to always keep the bath full (many Kobe residents found themselves without regular water supplies for over a month); and to keep a flashlight and radio close at hand. But the vast majority of Japanese ignore these recommendations. In the 1980s, a poll by the prime minister's office revealed that 68 percent of people had made no preparations at all for a quake.

Even the government remains optimistic. Leaflets, designed so as not to instill fear, show cute cartoon figures taking precautions and cheerfully evacuating according to plan. Earthquake preparedness is the focus of Disaster Day—September 1, anniversary of the Great Kantō Earthquake—when people across the land practice rescue drills and first-aid measures. But in reality, Disaster Day is little more than a nationwide fun fair, and even last year, after Kobe, there were no more participants than usual—a mere 13 million out of a population of 124 million.

Shizuoka prefecture, the area judged to be at the most immediate risk, is the exception that proves the rule. Many people do keep emergency supplies, and schools and companies have frequent earthquake drills. But housewife Itō Sumiko captures the attitude that permeates the rest of the nation: "When we lived in Shizuoka, we thought about quakes and secured our furniture, but when we moved to Tokyo, we stopped bothering. I never even get out of bed in an earthquake." Indeed, during the Kobe quake most people cowered under their futons, hoping for protection against flying furniture.

In the aftermath of Kobe, a wave of earthquake awareness swept the country. Sales of disaster supplies—from mineral water and flashlights to lamps and heaters that automatically shut off if they fall over—boomed. When the Tokyo Metropolitan Government conducted a poll of citizens in spring 1995, 84 percent said the Kobe disaster had made them more conscious of earthquakes; they had talked with their families about how they would find each other after a quake and about possible places to stay outside Tokyo, and they intended to take precautions such as "fixing furniture so it won't topple over" and "investigating emergency food and water supplies." A Marketing Data Bank survey of Tokyo businesspeople found that since Kobe 43 percent had

• escapist = 現実逃避的な *genjitsu tōhi-teki na* • impinge on = ～に影響する *~ni eikyō suru* • become blasé = 慣れきる *narekiru* • crockery = 瀬戸物／陶器 *setomono/tōki* • preparedness = 準備 *junbi* • permeate = 行き渡る *ikiwataru* • cower = 縮こまる *chijikomaru*

checked out emergency exits from their offices. Companies, aware of the risk of loss of electronic data if power lines were cut, were at last making arrangements to back up computers in a second city.

But as is so often the case in Japan, public interest was short-lived. In Tokyo, at least, the Aum Shinrikyō sarin gas attack soon obliterated all else. In the autumn of 1995, countrywide surveys revealed that while nearly 60 percent of the population had prepared an emergency package containing a battery-operated radio, medicine, and a flashlight—up from 40 percent in 1991—26 percent had still taken no precautions.

"My wife bought a flashlight for each of us and a supply of emergency food and water," says Nakada Yoshinori, a Tokyo salaryman. "But Kobe didn't really change the way we live. If I think about it, I'm pretty scared about the prospect of a major quake—so I try not to think about it."

University student Okada Sakura began with good intentions: "After Kobe I bought one of those rucksacks containing an emergency survival kit. But I'm a student and I get short of money each month, so I often eat some of the supplies. I replace them the next month—I just hope the earthquake happens at the beginning of the month, when my rucksack's full!"

The extraordinary degree of fatalism can to some extent be attributed to Buddhist philosophy: what will be will be, and one cannot change it. This life is part of the great continuum between other incarnations—or, as one Japanese friend of mine put it, "Life is just an interlude: you're dead before you're born and you're dead again afterwards, so it's no big deal, right?" In a land beset by natural disasters—typhoons and tsunami as well as earthquakes—it makes some sense: humankind is small and powerless in the face of such great forces.

Risks are also something one gets used to. When I first lived in Japan, earthquakes made me nervous; I would stop what I was doing and take cover. But gradually I came to ignore them. On returning to Japan several years later, I was woken in the night by a small quake. Jet-lagged and disoriented, for a moment I wondered where I was. Then I smiled contentedly: "Ah, earthquake. I must be in Japan." Snuggling under the futon, I fell fast asleep.

Earthquake Dos and Don'ts

DO turn off the gas supply (to reduce fire risk)

DO open doors (so they don't jam if the wall buckles)

DO take shelter under a sturdy table, in a reinforced doorway, or in the bathroom (where there is relatively little unsupported ceiling)

DON'T rush outside (where roof tiles, neon signs, air conditioners, or glass might fall on you)

• obliterate = 消し去る *keshisaru* • part of the great continuum between other incarnations = 永遠に続く輪廻転生のひとコマ *eien ni tsuzuku rinne tenshō no hitokoma* • snuggle = ここちよく身を休める *kokochi yoku mi o yasumeru*

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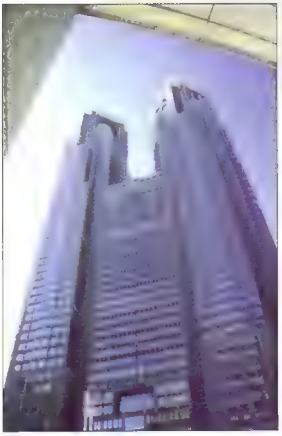
Another reason for complacency is a childlike faith in the expertise and competence of the authorities. It's not quite as foolish as it seems: who has not had similar feelings on boarding an airplane or a ride at Disneyland? Japan has always vaunted its ability to predict earthquakes (in 1994 around $115 million was spent on prediction—yet many experts doubt its value) as well as its quake-proof engineering and readiness to respond to quakes. Kobe proved such confidence unfounded.

Traditional Japanese houses are far from quakeproof. With their light, loosely pegged wooden frames and heavy tiled roofs, they are designed to withstand the heavy winds of a typhoon and to sway freely in a moderate quake. But in a major quake, roofs slump to the ground before the swaying even gets going. The Great Kantō Earthquake taught people to fear fire—but it was collapsing roofs that claimed over 90 percent of Kobe's 6,000 or so victims.

Some modern buildings are impressively quake-resistant. From the late 1970s, building regulations have been strict, and the newest, tallest structures boast flexible steel frames, shock absorbers at their foundations, and mobile weights at the top which shift to counterbalance the effects of a quake. Some bridges and tunnels, too, are models of technology. But a great many buildings predate the regulations and have not been upgraded. And even modern structures often suffer from shortcuts and substandard materials due to widespread corruption in the construction industry. In Kobe, for instance, sections of damaged Shinkansen track were found to have wooden blocks embedded in supposedly solid concrete pillars that supported them, while parts of the Hanshin expressway which collapsed proved to have poorly welded reinforcing bars. Since then, the authorities have rushed to reinforce expressways across the country; only time will tell whether it is too little too late.

(continued on page 42)



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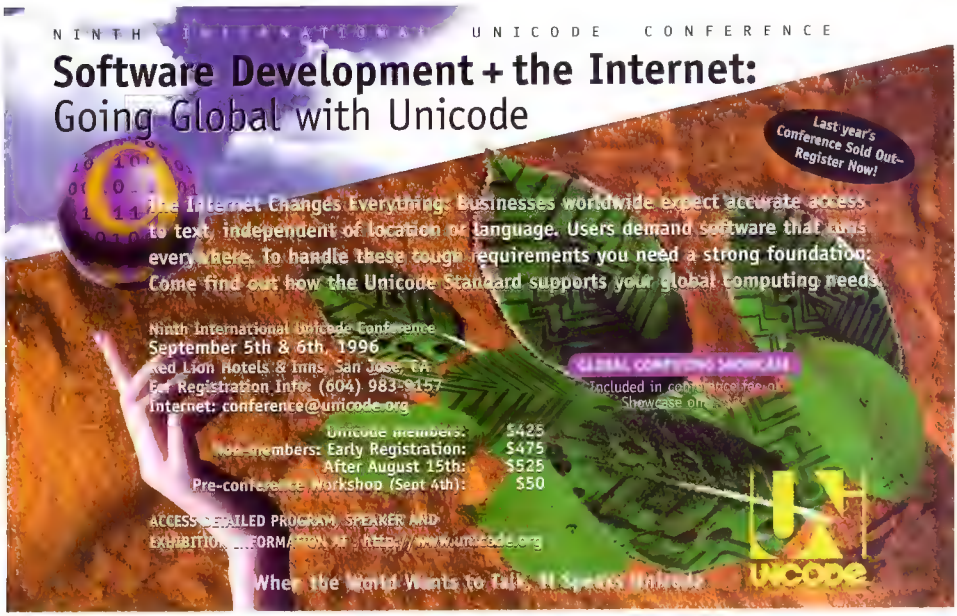
The new 48-story Tokyo City Hall, in the busy high-rise district of Shinjuku. Designed by architect Tange Kenzo and completed in 1991, it is one of a number of shining examples of modern Japanese earthquake-proof engineering that makes use of shock absorbers and counterbalances to minimize the effects of a quake.

• predate ～＝～より古い ～ *yori furui*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Peace of Mind for Sale

In the *Nikkei Shimbun*'s annual roundup of the year, "disaster-related goods" was cited as one of the big hits of 1995.

Stores and manufacturers were quick to ride the wave of concern that followed Kobe, and since last year most department stores have had a "disaster goods" corner. Along with emergency survival equipment, they feature apparatus for securing furniture, such as L-shaped braces and expanding brackets that anchor a bookcase in place, doorstop-like wedges, and protective plastic film to cover glass in case it shatters.

As well as individual items, there are typically a number of 24-hour survival kits in backpacks or smaller pouches. These may contain a first-aid kit, bottled water, dried food, a battery-operated radio, candles, waterproof matches, a flashlight, a Swiss army knife, a plastic raincoat or poncho, a thermal survival sheet, a towel, a rope, or even a blanket—in other words, the sort of foldaway emergency gear you might take on a camping trip. One kit even includes a whistle—presumably invaluable for leading rescuers to you in the rubble, provided you happened to have it with you when the quake struck.

"Right after Kobe, there was a boom in sales," says a 20-year-old assistant in the disaster goods section of one department store. "After a few months, sales of emergency packs tapered off, but equipment for holding furniture in place has continued to sell well." She admits, however, that she has bought nothing herself.

Some manufacturers have gone on to develop new products. Mitsui & Co. brought out a kit called Tasukaru Goods Plus 1, which combines emergency supplies with access to a special telephone message transmission service that comes into operation in the event of a major quake. In July 1995, Omron Corporation launched an earthquake alarm, dubbed Yuretta, or "Shaking Boy," which senses the magnitude of a quake and starts giving verbal instructions, such as "Duck under the table" and "Turn off the gas," for those who may go blank with panic. In its first six months, Omron sold 20,000 of the devices, marketed at ¥24,800 apiece; they proved particularly popular with hotels and factories.

Sales of dried foods such as biscuits and instant noodles also skyrocketed in the months after Kobe, and a number of companies set about developing gourmet dried foods. SS Enterprise Corp. even came out with "Magic Rice," a type of rice—the top-quality Japanese variety, of course—that can be eaten after simply soaking in cold water. The Japanese Diet, meanwhile, has been stocking up on vast quantities of space foods, originally produced in the United States by NASA for astronauts.

• apparatus = 器具／装置 *kigu/sochi* • brace = 留め金具 *tome-kanagu* • thermal = 保温性の高い *hoon-sei no takai* • foldaway = 折り畳み式の *oritatami-shiki no*

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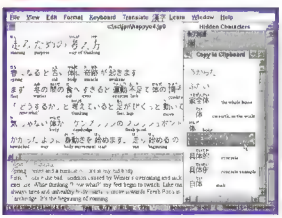

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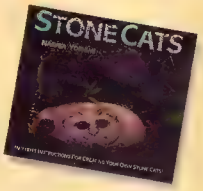

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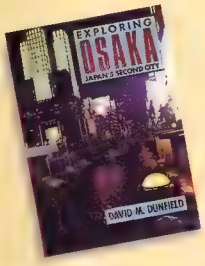

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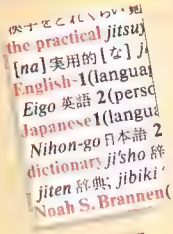

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The popularity of the series seems to stem from both the good-natured wisdom of its hero, Judge Kawata, and the glimpse it offers of Japan's judicial system as it deals with current social issues ranging from divorce to substance abuse.

Judge Kawata Yoshio is considered "a rather strange fellow" by his colleagues. As the son of a Supreme Court justice, he had an excellent chance of advancing to the upper echelons of Japan's judicial system, but he wasn't interested. He remains instead at a low-level family court in a remote city where the rural setting gives him the opportunity to pursue his true love—plants. In between hearings, on lunch breaks, and just about any time he isn't in court, Kawata is sitting in nearby flower beds, running his fingers along bushes, or staring off into space in a park.

He may be strange, but the lessons Judge Kawata learns from his experiences with plants come in handy when interacting with people as well. Many of his cases deal with wayward children, divorce, and the general trauma of human relations gone awry. Seeing parallels in the way both plants and people respond to love and attention, he maintains a perspective that often leads to more humane solutions in the courtroom.

The story so far . . .

Judge Ishimine Wataru has just been transferred from Tokyo to the suburban Harukawa City—a major detour in his career, since assignments to small regional courts outside of Tokyo are generally tantamount to a demotion. Flashbacks give some hint to an argument that preceded the transfer, but the specifics remain a mystery. In any case, Ishimine appears to like the new town, and his French wife, Sara, is delighted to be away from the hustle and bustle of the big city.

The couple arrives ahead of their belongings, and they decide to explore their new hometown. When Ishimine, an amateur photographer, spots two little boys rushing by, he grabs Sara and follows behind in hopes of getting some good pictures. Soon they find themselves in a lush park, eavesdropping on the boys as they chat with a peculiar man squatting in the ferns. The man (who, unbeknownst to Ishimine, is Judge Kawata) is enthusiastically teaching the boys about the reproductive habits of ferns. The fern's spores, he says, "form something called a prothallium . . . something like a bride and groom . . . ." Eventually, the young couple strikes up a conversation with the man, who welcomes them warmly to Harukawa and offers to take them to a nearby valley to see the kerria blossoms when they come into bloom. It's an innocent proposal, but somehow it strikes a nerve . . . .

The word *kasai* means "family court" when written as 家裁, an abbreviation for *katei saibansho* (家庭裁判所). The authors of this manga have created a pun of sorts by replacing 裁 (*sai*, "judgment/decision") with 栽 (*sai*, "planting").

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田舎町とはいえ、
よくもまあこんな人物が
残っていたものです。
前世紀の生き残り、
生きる化石のような人物です。
私は少し哀れむような気持ちで
その人物を眺めていたのですが、
ふいに腹立たしい気持ちに
なりました。
1

この人の笑顔を
眺めているうちに
自分がここで少しも楽しんで
いないのに気付いたのです。
2

1 **Letter**: 田舎町 とはいえ、よく も まあ こんな 人物 が 残っていた もの です。
Inaka-machi to wa ie, yoku mo mā konna jinbutsu ga nokotte ita mono desu.
country town/city though it is well (emph.) (interj.) this kind of personage (subj.) remained thing/situation is
Even though this is an outlying city, I was amazed to discover that a person like this still existed. (PL3)

前世紀 の 生き残り、 生きる 化石 のような 人物 です。
Zen-seiki no ikinokori, ikiru kaseki no yō na jinbutsu desu.
previous century of/from survivor/holdover living fossil like personage is
A holdover from the last century, he is a man who is like a living fossil.
This man was like a living fossil, a holdover from the last century. (PL3)

Letter: 私 は 少し 哀れむ ような 気持ち で その 人物 を 眺めていた のです が、
Watashi wa sukoshi awaremu yō na kimochi de sono jinbutsu o nagamete ita no desu ga,
I/me as for a little take pity like feeling with that personage (obj.) was gazing at (explan.) but
ふいに 腹立たしい 気持ち になりました。
fui ni haradatashii kimochi ni narimashita.
suddenly irritating/exasperating feeling became
I was gazing at that person with feelings of a little pity, but suddenly I became irritated.
As I gazed at this man, feeling a little sorry for him, a wave of irritation suddenly swept over me. (PL3)

- *inaka* refers to any place outside of an urban center, so it can mean simply "country" (sometimes including "suburbs") as opposed to "city"; but taking Tokyo as the point of reference, *inaka* can include regional cities of considerable size, which Tokyo dwellers regard as belonging to "the sticks/the boonies" just as much as the rural areas that surround them. This *inaka-machi* ("country town") refers to Harukawa, which we learned in the first episode is a city of 230,000.
- *~ to wa ie* = "though it is/though it may be ~."
- *yoku mā ~ (mono da/desu)* expresses surprise/amazement at another person's behavior. Inserting *mo* adds emphasis.
- *nokotte ita* is the past form of *nokotte iru*, from *nokoru* ("remain/be left over").
- *no yō na* follows nouns to mean "~-like/that is like ~"; *yō na* has the same meaning after verbs and complete clauses/sentences. *Kaseki no yō na jinbutsu* = "a person who is like a fossil," *sukoshi awaremu* = "take a little pity," and *sukoshi awaremu yō na kimochi (de)* = "(with) feelings that are like taking a little pity" → "feeling a little sorry for."
- *nagamete ita* is the past form of *nagamete iru* ("am/is/are gazing"), from *nagameru* ("gaze").
- *haradatashii* is an adjective based on the expression *hara ga tatsu* (腹が立つ, literally, "belly rises" → "get angry/irritated"), and *~ kimochi ni narimashita* is the PL3 past form of *~ kimochi ni naru*, literally, "become/get a ~ feeling," which can typically be reduced to "become/feel ~" → *haradatashii kimochi ni naru* = "become irritated."

2 **Letter**: この 人 の 笑顔 を 眺めているうちに
Kono hito no egao o nagamete iru uchi ni
this person 's smiling face (obj.) while gazing at
自分 が ここで 少し も 楽しんでいない の に 気付いた のです
jibun ga koko de sukoshi mo tanoshinde inai no ni kizuita no desu.
myself (subj.) here at small amount even was not enjoying (nom.) (obj.) realized (explan.)
While gazing at this person's smiling face, I realized that I myself was not enjoying myself even a little here.
Looking at his smiling face, I realized that I was not enjoying myself in the least here. (PL3)

- *uchi ni* after a verb means "while/as you are ~," so *nagamete-iru uchi ni* = "while gazing "
- *jibun* = "oneself"— or "me/myself," "he/himself," "you/yourself," "they/themselves," etc., depending on the context
- *sukoshi* = "a little/small amount," and *sukoshi mo* is followed by a negative later in the sentence to give the meaning "not even a little/not in the least."
- *tanoshinde inai* is the negative form of *tanoshinde iru* ("am/is/are enjoying"), from *tanoshimu* ("enjoy").
- *no* is a nominalizer that makes the complete thought/sentence *jibun ga koko de sukoshi mo tanoshinde inai* ("I am not enjoying myself here even a little") act like a single noun.
- *kizuita* (or *ki ga tsuita*) is the past form of *kizuku* (or *ki ga tsuku*), meaning "realize/become aware of/notice." *Ni* marks what the person has realized/noticed.

せっかくですがお断わりします！
1
……
どうして？
どうしてもだよ。
2
ヤマブキの花が見たい！
そのうち行けるよ。
3
どうして？
せっかくこの方が親切なのにおかしいよ。
4
ちょっと向こうで話そう。
5
ねぇ、どうしたの？ワタル、変だよ。
6
君はあんな人とつき合いたいのか？
7
いい人じゃない。
ぼくは写真に撮れば充分なんだ！
8

1 **Ishimine**: せっかくです が お断りします。
Sekkaku desu ga o-kotowari shimasu.
kind is but (hon.)-refusal do
"That's very kind of you, but we'll have to decline." (PL4)

- *sekkaku* indicates that a thing or situation is special in some way—whether because it's a rare occasion, a long-awaited event, something accomplished with much difficulty, or simply a kind gesture. Most commonly it occurs with expressions of regret or disappointment that the special thing/situation must come to naught.
- *o-kotowari shimasu* is a PL4 humble form of *kotowaru* ("refuse/turn down").

2 **Sara**: どうして?
Doshite?
"Why?" (PL2)

Ishimine: どうしても だよ。
Dōshite mo da yo.
why even is (emph.)
"Just because." (PL2)

- *doshite* is an informal *naze* ("why"). The expression *dōshite mo (da/desu)* means "for any/every/whatever reason" → "just because."

3 **Sara**: ヤマブキ の 花 が 見たい!
Yamabuki no hana ga mitai!
kerria of flowers/blossoms (obj.) want to see
"I want to see the kerria blossoms!" (PL2)

Ishimine: そのうち 行ける よ。
Sono uchi ikeru yo.
in time/eventually can go (emph.)
"We can still go sometime [on our own]." (PL2)

- *yamabuki* = "kerria" (*Kerria japonica*), a shrub of the rose family that produces bright, golden-yellow flowers in the spring.
- *mitai* is the "want to" form of *miru* ("see/look at"). *Ga* marks the object to be seen. For verbs expressing desire or ability, *ga* often marks the object rather than the subject.
- *ikeru* is the potential ("can/be able to") form of *iku* ("go").

4 **Sara**: どうして? / せっかく この 方 が 親切 なのに、 おかしい よ
Dōshite? / Sekkaku kono kata ga shinsetsu na-noni, okashii yo.
why specially this person (subj.) kind even though [he] is is strange (emph.)
"Why? / [To refuse] even though this person is especially kind is strange."
"Why should we refuse his kind offer? It's strange." (PL2)

- *na-noni* ("even though [he/she/it] is" or "in spite of the fact that [he/she/it] is") expresses discontent or disappointment regarding what has occurred or been said. It's often used when stating an objection or protest.

5 **Ishimine**: ちょっと 向こう で 話そう。
Chotto mukō de hanasō.
a little over there at let's talk
"Let's talk over there a little."
"Let's go over there a minute." (PL2)

- *chotto* (lit., "a little") often refers to a small amount of time: "a second/a minute."
- *hanasō* is the volitional ("let's/I shall") form of *hanasu* ("talk/speak").
- the particle *de* marks where an action takes place/will take place.

6 **Sara**: ねぇ、 どう した の? ワタル、 変 だ よ
Nē, dō shita no? Wataru, hen da yo.
(interj.) what/how did (explan.) (name) strange is/are (emph.)
"What's wrong, Wataru? You're acting weird." (PL2)

- *dō* is "how/what" and *shita* is the past form of *suru* ("do/make"), so *do shita* can literally mean "what did [you/he] do?" But it's most commonly used as an idiomatic expression meaning "what's wrong [with you/him]?/what happened [to you/him]?"
- *hen (da)* means "is strange/funny/odd." In this case she's referring to the way he's acting.

7 **Ishimine**: 君 は あんな 人 と つき合いたい のか?
Kimi wa anna hito to tsukiaitai no ka?
you as for like that person with want to socialize (explan.-?)
"Do you really want to hang out with a guy like that?" (PL2)

- *kimi* is an informal word for "you," generally used only by males when addressing equals or subordinates.
- *anna* ("that kind of/like that") is often used to imply that the item it modifies is inferior/undesirable/unacceptable, so *anna hito* here has a derogatory feeling.
- *tsukiaitai* is the "want to" form of *tsukiau* ("socialize/consort/keep company"); *to* marks the person with whom one socializes/consorts.

8 **Sara**: いい 人 じゃない。
Ii hito ja nai.
good/fine person is not
"He's a nice person, is he not?"
"He's a nice man." (PL2)

Ishimine: ぼく は 写真 に 撮れば 充分 なんだ!
Boku wa shashin ni toreba jūbun na n da.
I/me as for photo in if take plenty is-(explan.)
"For me, it's plenty if I take his picture."
"Just taking his picture is enough for me." (PL2)

- *ja nai* looks like "is not," but here it's a colloquial short form of a rhetorical question, *ja nai ka* or *ja nai no* ("isn't it so?"). The rhetorical question assumes an affirmative answer, giving it the effect of a strong assertion: "He's a nice person, is he not? Yes, he most certainly is."
- *toreba* is a conditional ("if/when") form of *toru* ("take [a picture]"). Though the distinction is slight, the more commonly heard *shashin o toru* is like "take his picture," while *shashin ni toru* has the feeling of "take/capture/preserve [his image] in a photograph."

それひどい言い方。
1
ひどいかもしれないけど……
こんな町……
2
本当は来たくなかったんだ。
3
やっぱり…私のせいでこの町に来たのね。
4
今の所長のお言葉撤回して下さい！
5
おいおい……私だって、外国人だからと言ってるわけじゃありませんよ。
ただ、裁判官というのはなかなか離婚もままならないし、偉くなれば部下の世話も見なきゃならんからな……
6
それが偏見だと言っているんです！
なぜ結婚相手が外国人だと離婚するんですか!?
7

1 **Sara**: それ、ひどい　言い方。
Sore, hidoi ii-kata.
that terrible way of saying
"What a terrible thing to say!" (PL2)

- *ii* is the stem of *iu* ("say"), and *-kata* is a suffix meaning "method/way of ~ing," so *ii-kata* = "way of saying"; it can refer to tone of voice, locution, or the particular content of what is/was said.

2 **Ishimine**: ひどい かもしれない けど . . . こんな　町 . . .
Hidoi kamo shirenai kedo . . . konna machi . . .
terrible might be but like this town/city
"It may be terrible, but . . . a city like this . . ."
[see next frame]

- *~ kamo shirenai* is literally "cannot know/tell if ~," which is the standard way to say "may possibly be/might be/is perhaps ~."
- *konna* ("this kind of/like this") is like *anna* in that it is often used to belittle the item it modifies, so *konna machi* is like "this stupid town/city."

3 **Ishimine**: 本当　は　来たくなかった　んだ。
hontō wa kitakunakatta n da.
truth as for didn't want to come (explan.)
"in truth, I didn't want to come."
"It may be terrible, but the truth is I never wanted to come to this stupid city." (PL2)

- *kitakunakatta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *kitakunai*, negative of *kitai*, the "want to" form of *kuru* ("come"). The *-tai* form of a verb conjugates like an adjective.

4 **Sara**: やっぱり . . .　私の　せい で この　町　に 来た　の　ね。
Yappari watashi no sei de kono machi ni kita no ne.
as expected my fault by this town to came (explan.) (colloq.)
"As I thought, we came to this town because of me."
"So it's true. We came to this town because of me." (PL2)

- *yappari* implies that this is what she has suspected all along.

- *sei* is a noun meaning "consequence/result/effect," so *watashi no sei* is literally "a result/consequence of me" → "my fault."
- *kita* is the plain/abrupt past form of *kuru* ("come").

5 **Ishimine**: (flashback) 今　の　所長　の　お言葉、　撤回して下さい!
Ima no shochō no o-kotoba, tekkai shite kudasai!
now of chief/you 's (hon.)-words retract-(request)
"The words you just now said, please retract them!"
"I must ask you to retract what you have just said!" (PL2)

- *chō* means "head/chief/director," and *shochō* refers to the "head/chief/director" of any organization or body whose official name ends with *-sho* (所). Here it refers to the "head judge" at the court where Ishimine worked previously. As is often done in Japanese, Ishimine is using the head judge's title where an English speaker would refer to his listener as "you."
- *no* between two nouns makes the first into a modifier for the second in a wide variety of ways. When the first noun refers to a person the *no* is possessive, so *shochō no* = "the head judge's," or in this case, "your": *shochō no o-kotoba* = "your words." When three or more nouns are connected with *nos*, various groupings can apply. Here, the first *no* makes *ima* ("now") into a modifier for the combination *shochō no o-kotoba*: "your words of now" → "the words that you spoke just now" → "what you just said."
- *tekkai* is a noun for "retraction," and *tekkai shite* is the *-te* form of *tekkai suru*, its verb form. The *-te* form of a verb plus *kudasai* makes a polite request that the action be done.

6 **Judge**: おいおい . . . 私　だって、外国人　だ から　と　言ってる　わけ じゃありません よ
Oi oi, watashi datte, gaikokujin da kara to itteru wake ja arimasen yo.
(interj.) I/me as for foreigner is because (quote) am saying situation is not (emph.)
"Now, now, I'm not saying this because she's a foreigner." (PL3)

Judge: ただ、　裁判官　と　いう　の　は　なかなか　離婚　も　ままならない し、
Tada, saiban-kan to iu no wa nakanaka rikon mo mamanaranai shi,
just/only judge (quote) say/call one/what as for easily/readily divorce too not go as wish and
偉く　なれば　部下　の　世話　も 見なきゃならん から　な . . .
eraku nareba buka no sewa mo minakya naran kara na.
important if/when become subordinates of care/help also must see to because (colloq.)
"It's just that it's not necessarily so easy for a judge to get a divorce, and when you rise to the upper ranks you also have to look after your subordinates." (PL2)

- a single *oi* is a "hey!/yo!" to get someone's attention, but a doubled *oi oi* is like "now, now/hold on/take it easy."
- *datte* here is a colloquial equivalent of *mo*, which usually means "too/also" but can sometimes be just a slightly emphatic way of marking the topic: "as for ~."
- *itteru* is a contraction of *itte iru* ("am/is/are saying"), from *iu* ("say").
- *wake ja arimasen* is the PL3 form of *wake ja nai*, which is literally "it's not the situation that ~." This kind of explanatory form is often used in Japanese where an English speaker would simply use emphasis → "I'm *not* saying ~."
- *tada* ("only/just") can preface an explanation with the feeling of "it's just that ~."
- *to iu no wa* is literally "as for what is called," but it's often just a fancy *wa* ("as for").
- when *nakanaka* is followed by a negative, it means "(not) easily/readily/quickly." *Mamanaranai* is an expression for "not go according to one's desires," so *nakanaka rikon mo mamanaranai* – "divorce, too, does not go easily according to one's desires" → "it's not so easy to get divorced." *Mo* here gives the feeling of "divorce, too, in addition to [other unspecified things]"—implying there are in fact many constraints on a judge's conduct.
- *eraku* is the adverb form of *erai* ("eminent/important/high-ranking"), and *nareba* is a conditional ("if/when") form of *naru* ("become"), so *eraku naru* = "when [you] become important/high-ranking" (see Basic Japanese, page 94).
- *minakya naran* is a contraction of *minakereba naranai*, a "must/have to" form of *miru* ("see/look"). *Sewa o miru* means "look after/take care of"; using *mo* instead of *o* again implies "in addition to other unspecified responsibilities."

(continued on next page)

そうムキにならんでくれよ。
1
2
君のせいじゃない。
もうやめよう…あいつのせいでこんなケンカするなんて……
3
私帰ります。
ち、違うよ待ってくれ！
4
5
嘘つき！
6
……
だって……
あなたは苦しいの秘密にしていたでしょう？
7
……

(continued from previous page)

7 **Ishimine**: それ が 偏見 だ と 言っている んです!
Sore ga henken da to itte iru n desu!
that (subj.) prejudiced view is (quote) am saying (explan.)
"It's that that I'm saying is a prejudiced view."
"That's what I call prejudice!" (PL3)

Ishimine: なぜ 結婚 相手 が 外国人 だと 離婚 する んですか?
Naze kekkon aite ga gaikokujin da to rikon suru n desu ka?
why marriage partner (subj.) foreigner if [she] is divorce do (explan.-?)
"Why will one get divorced if one's marital partner is a foreigner?"
"Why do you assume someone who marries a foreigner will get divorced?" (PL3)

- *itte iru* is the progressive ("am/is/are ~ing") form of *iu* ("say").
- *aite* basically means "counterpart" and can refer to persons ranging from a "companion/mate/partner" to a "rival/opponent/enemy." *Kekkon aite* = "marital partner."
- ~ *da* = "is ~," and ~ *da to* here makes a conditional phrase: "if/when [she] is ~."
- *rikon* is a noun referring to "divorce"; adding *suru* ("do") makes it a verb.

---

1 **Judge**: そう ムキ にならんでくれ よ。
Sō muki ni narande kure yo.
that way excited/hot don't become-(request) (emph.)
"I wish you wouldn't get so worked up about it." (PL2)

- *muki ni narande* is a contraction of *muki ni naranai de*, negative *-te* form of *muki ni naru*, which is an expression for "lose one's temper" or "become overly worked up." *Kure* after the *-te* form of another verb makes an abrupt request or gentle command.

2 **Sound FX**: バーン
Ban
Bang (sound of slamming hands down on desk)

3 **Ishimine** (present): 君の せい じゃない。
Kimi no sei ja nai.
your fault is not
"It's not because of you." (PL2)

Ishimine: もう やめよう... あいつ の せい で こんな ケンカ する なんて...
Mō yameyō, aitsu no sei de konna kenka suru nante.
already/now let's stop that guy 's fault/account on this kind of fight/quarrel do/have as for
"Let's stop it already—fighting like this on that guy's account."
"Enough already. Let's stop fighting like this on that guy's account." (PL2)

- *yameyō* is the volitional ("let's/I shall") form of *yameru* ("stop/quit").
- *aitsu* comes from *ano yatsu* ("that guy/person"), a rather rough way of referring to someone.
- ~ *no sei de* = "on account of/because of ~."
- *kenka* (喧嘩) is a noun for "fight," and adding *suru* makes it a verb.
- *nante* here can be thought of as equivalent to *no wa* and essentially implies "as for [the act of] ~." The sentence is in inverted syntax; normal order would be *konna kenka suru nante mō yameyō* ("as for fighting like this, let's stop it already").

4 **Sara**: 私 帰ります。
Watashi kaerimasu.
I/me will go home
"I'm going home." (PL3)

Ishimine: ち、 違う よ。 待ってくれ!
Chi- chigau yo. Matte kure!
(stammer) is different/wrong (emph.) wait-(request)
"W-wait! You don't understand!" (PL2)

- *wa*, to mark *watashi* ("I/me") as the topic, has been omitted; *kaerimasu* is the PL3 form of *kaeru* ("go home").
- *chigau* literally means "differs/is different," but often implies "is wrong/mistaken/a misunderstanding" → "you don't understand."
- *matte* is the *-te* form of *matsu* ("wait"), and *kure* after the *-te* form of a verb makes a fairly abrupt request or gentle command.

5 **Sound FX**: パシッ
Pashi!
Thwack! (sound of slapping his cheek)

6 **Sara**: 嘘つき!
Usotsuki!
liar
"Liar!" (PL1-2)

- *uso* is a noun for "lie/falsehood," *uso (o) tsuku* is the verb "lie/tell a lie," and *usotsuki* = "liar."

7 **Sara**: だって... あなた は 苦しい の、 秘密 に していた でしょう?
Datte, anata wa kurushii no, himitsu ni shite ita deshō?
I mean you as for difficult/painful (nom.) secret as were keeping probably/right?
"You were keeping your pain hidden from me, weren't you?" (PL3)

- the conjunction *datte* is often used to introduce explanations of or further elaborations on what the speaker has just said: "because/after all/I mean ~."
- *kurushii* is an adjective with a broad range of meanings, from "painful/distressing" to "arduous/tough/straining" to "straitened/needy." *No* makes it a noun, so *kurushii no* = "painfulness/pain."

(continued on next page)

私は二人一緒のつもりだったのに、ずっと一人ずつだったんでしょう?
そんなの結婚していることになりません……
1
セーラ……
2
兄ちゃん、「ぜんようたい」ってああいうの?
3
ううん。
おじさんがぜんようたいは一人ぼっちだって言ってたから、あんな幸せなのは嘘うよ。
4
ふ〜ん…
5

7 *(continued from previous page)*

- *himitsu* = "secret," and *himitsu ni shite ita* is the plain/abrupt past form of *himitsu ni shite iru* ("is keeping/maintaining [something] as a secret"), from the expression *himitsu ni suru* = "make [something] a secret."
- *deshō* makes a conjecture, "surely/probably," but when spoken with the intonation of a question it's like a tag question: "right?/isn't that so?" Depending on the exact tone, the question can be mostly rhetorical and serve as more of an accusation than a question.

---

1 **Sara**: 私 は 二人 一緒 の つもり だった のに、 ずっと 一人 ずつ だった ん でしょう?
Watashi wa futari issho no tsumori datta noni, zutto hitori zutsu datta n deshō?
I/me as for two people together of assumption was even though all along one person each was (explan.) right?
"I thought we were two people together, but we were always just one person each, weren't we?"
"I thought we were going through this together, but actually we've each been alone all along, haven't we?" (PL3)

Sara: そんなの 結婚している こと になりません。
Sonna no kekkon shite iru koto ni narimasen.
such a thing is/are married thing/situation not become
"That hardly counts as a marriage." (PL3)

- the standard counter suffix for people is *-nin*, but the first two are irregular: "1 person" = *hitori*, and "2 people" = *futari*. *Futari issho* = "two people together"; *hitori zutsu* = "one person each/apiece"—here implying each person is separate/alone.
- *tsumori* may be more familiar in the meaning of "intent," but it can also mean "assumption/conviction/belief." ~ *no tsumori datta* = "was of the belief/assumption that ~" → "I thought ~."
- *noni* ("even though") often expresses disappointment/regret at something the speaker thinks should have been the case but wasn't, or should have happened but didn't.
- *zutto* means "throughout [a period of time]"; when no period of time is specified it means "all along/always."
- *kekkon suru* = "get married," and *kekkon shite iru* = "am/is/are married."
- ~ *koto ni narimasen* is the PL3 form of ~ *koto ni naranai* (lit., "doesn't become the situation that ~"), which after a verb makes an idiomatic expression meaning "it doesn't/can't count as [doing/having done the action]."

2 **Ishimine**: セーラ . . .
Sēra . . .
(name)
"Sara . . ." (PL2)

3 **Younger Bro.**: 兄ちゃん、 「ぜんようたい」って ああいう の?
Niichan, "zen'yōtai" tte ā iu no?
older brother-(dimin.) prothallium (quote) that kind of thing?
"Older brother, as for what is called 'prothallium,' is it that kind of a thing?"
"Niichan, is a prothallium something like that?" (PL2)

- *niichan* is a more familiar equivalent of *(o)niisan*. Younger siblings usually address their older brothers as *(o)niichan* or *(o)niisan* rather than by name (the *o-* is honorific).
- in the last episode, explaining about spores to the two boys, Kuwata described the male and female reproductive cells that develop in the prothallium as being like a bride and groom.
- *tte* here is a colloquial equivalent of the quotative phrase *to iu no wa* ("as for what is called").
- *ā iu* = "that kind of" and *no* is like the pronoun "one/ones" → "that kind of one/thing" → "something like that." As in English, almost any word can be made into a question simply by giving it the intonation of a question.

4 **Older Bro.**: ううん。/ おじさん が ぜんようたい は 一人ぼっち だ って
Uun. / Ojisan ga zen'yōtai wa hitoribotchi da tte
no uncle (subj.) prothallium as for all alone is/are (quote)
言ってた から、 あんな 幸せな の は 違う よ。
itteta kara, anna shiawase na no wa chigau yo.
was saying because/so like that happy ones as for is/are different (emph.)
"Nah, Ojisan said prothallia are all alone, so happy ones like that are different."
"Nah. Ojisan said prothallia are all alone, so people who are that happy have to be something else." (PL2)

- *un* (うん) is an informal "yes," and *un* (うーん) represents pondering, but *uun* (ううん), with a slight inflection between the two *u*'s, means "no/nothing/never mind."
- *ojisan* (lit., "uncle") here refers to Kuwata; *ojisan* is commonly used to address or refer to men past their mid-twenties or so when you don't know their name; for politeness, children are generally expected to address or refer to adult men as *ojisan* even when they are close acquaintances.
- *hitoribotchi* is a colloquial word for "all alone"; *hitoribotchi da* = "is/are all alone."
- *tte* here is simply a colloquial equivalent of quotative *to*; *itteta* is a contraction of *itte ita* ("was saying"), past form of *itte iru* ("is saying"), from *iu* ("say").
- *anna* = "that kind of/like that"; here it carries no derogatory tone (cf. p. 29).

5 **Younger Bro.**: ふ〜ん. . .
Fūn.
(interj.)
"I see . . ." (PL2)

- *fūn* is an interjection showing interest or understanding: "Really?/Oh yeah?/I see."

ごめん……
1
やれやれ、
あの妙な人物に会ったおかげで、
新しい町に着いた早々、
夫婦喧嘩をするはめになりました。
早速減点一です。
しかし、こうやって手紙を
書きながら考えてみると、
早いうちに前任地での
わだかまりを妻と話せたことは
幸運だったのかもしれません。
敬具
2
追伸
来月にはヤマブキを
眺めに行く予定です。
3

1 **Ishimine**: ごめん。
Gomen.
(apology)
"I'm sorry." (PL2)

- *gomen*, from the honorific prefix *go-* and *menjiru* ("exempt/excuse"), is an informal word for apologizing. A more formal version is *gomen nasai*.

2 **Letter**: やれやれ、あの 妙な 人物 に会った おかげで、
Yare-yare, ano myo na jinbutsu ni atta okage de,
(interj.) that strange personage met thanks to
So, thanks to meeting that strange man,

新しい 町 に着いた 早々、 夫婦喧嘩 を する はめ になりました
atarashii machi ni tsuita sōso, fūfu-genka o suru hame ni narimashita.
new town to arrived immediately after marital spat (obj.) do/have plight became
"immediately upon arriving in the new town, I came to the plight of having a marital spat."
my wife and I wound up quarreling immediately upon arriving in our new hometown. (PL3)

早速 減点一 です
Sassoku genten ichi desu.
right away/already 1 point deduction is
I've already lost a point.
I've already got one strike. (PL3)

Letter: しかし こうやって 手紙 を 書きながら 考えてみると、
Shikashi kō yatte tegami o kakinagara kangaete miru to,
but in this way letter (obj.) while writing if/when try thinking
But when I think about it in this way while writing a letter,

早いうちに 前任地 で の わだかまり を 妻 と 話せた こと は
hayai uchi ni zenninchi de no wadakamari o tsuma to hanaseta koto wa
early on previous post at that was antagonism/bad feelings (obj.) wife with was able to speak situation as for
the fact that I was so soon able to talk with my wife about the bad feelings at my last post

幸運だった の かもしれません。
kōun datta no kamo shiremasen.
was fortunate (explan.) may possibly be
may have been fortunate.
But reflecting on it as I write this letter, I think it may have been a blessing that I was able to talk with my wife about the bad feelings left from my last post so soon after arriving here. (PL3)

敬具
Keigu
(complimentary close)
Sincerely yours,

- *yare-yare* is a verbalized sigh of relief, fatigue, or exasperation—here mostly the first.
- *atta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *au* ("meet"), and *ni* marks the person met
- *ano myō na jinbutsu ni atta* is a complete thought/sentence ("[I/we] met that strange person") modifying *okage*, which essentially refers to "indebtedness" (the *o-* is actually honorific, but cannot be dropped in this use); *okage de* means "owing to/thanks to."
- *tsuita* is the plain/abrupt past form of *tsuku* ("arrive"), and *sosō* follows a verb with the meaning "immediately after [the action is done/occurs]."
- *fūfu* = "husband and wife" and *-genka* comes from *kenka* ("fight/quarrel") → *fūfu-genka* = "marital spat."
- *hame* refers to a "bad situation/plight/fix," and *narimashita* is the PL3 past form of *naru* ("become"); *~ hame ni naru* after a verb implies the action or event was unwanted/unintended
- *keigu* is probably the most common of several expressions used in the complimentary close of a formal letter.
- *yatte* is the *-te* form of *yaru*, an informal word for "do"; *kō yatte* = "doing this way" → "in this way."
- *kaki* is the stem of *kaku* ("write"), and *-nagara* attached to the stem of a verb means "while [doing the action]."
- *kangaete* is the *-te* form of *kangaeru* ("think"), and *miru* after the *-te* form of a verb implies "try [doing the action]." *To* after a non-past verb can make a conditional "if/when" meaning.
- *hayai* = "early," and *uchi ni* = "while," so *hayai uchi ni* = "while it is early" → "early on/soon."
- *zen-* (前) as a prefix means "former/previous," and *ninchi* (lit., "land/location of appointment") means "post" in the sense of the city or geographical locale where the person is posted in his work. *Zenninchi de* = "at [my] previous post" and *zennichi de no ~* = "~ that was at [my] previous post" → "~ left from my previous post."
- *hanaseta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *hanaseru*, the potential ("can/be able to") form of *hanasu* ("speak"). *Hayai uchi ni zenninchi de no wadakamari o tsuma to hanaseta* is a complete thought/sentence ("early on, [I] was able to speak with my wife about the bad feelings from my previous post") modifying *koto* ("thing/situation/fact").
- *koun datta* is the past form of *kōun da* ("is fortunate").
- *kamo shiremasen* is the PL3 form of *kamo shirenai* ("might be/may possibly be").

3 **Letter**: 追伸
Tsuishin
postscript
P.S.

来月 に は ヤマブキ を 眺め に 行く 予定 です。
Raigetsu ni wa yamabuki o nagame ni iku yotei desu.
next month during as for kerria (obj.) gaze/view (purpose) go plan/schedule is
Next month we plan to go see the kerria blossoms. (PL3)

- *nagame* is the stem form of *nagameru* ("gaze [at]/view"), and the stem form of a verb followed by *ni iku* means "go to [do the action]."
- *yamabuki o nagame ni iku* is a complete thought/sentence ("[we] will go to view the kerria blossoms") modifying *yotei* ("plan/schedule").

Warning: Low Humor Ahead →

Well, it's not something we'd like to do every day (in fact, after reading them for the past few weeks, we'd like never to have to do it again), but for this issue we have selected a number of short manga with puns as punchlines. The Japanese language is filled with homonyms, making puns (*goroawase*, 語呂合わせ) and other word games (*share*, しゃれ) possible—and popular. As can be seen in *Mangajin*'s regular Brand News column, puns turn up regularly in Japanese. That doesn't mean they are all funny, of course, and there is a word in Japanese for bad puns, too: *dajare* (だじゃれ). We are aware that some of the jokes which follow would fall under that heading, and we do apologize.

Earthquakes

(continued from page 20)

In many cases, including Kobe, safety standards are consciously kept to a minimum by the authorities for financial reasons, in the conviction that, ultimately, economic growth is more important to society than protecting individual safety. Even in the wake of Kobe, the belief in growth lives on, and planners' dreams of sky-high buildings on reclaimed land have every chance of becoming reality.

Kobe also highlighted the authorities' lack of ability to respond to a quake—inability to respond at all when the chain of command was broken, inability to take the initiative and find alternative means of access when, for instance, roads were blocked. In Japanese society, people are not trained to question established systems—just as "the way" is fundamental to tea ceremony or judo, so in other avenues, too, protocol is paramount. As Hadfield sees it, emphasis on form over substance is the excuse that allows both authorities and citizens to avoid facing many an unpleasant reality. When it comes to quakes, a few token gestures satisfy the demands of form, and the substance of dealing with the problem can be ignored.

Kobe's inhabitants are now facing the consequences. Having seen how badly the system can let them down, they are learning to look after themselves. Citizens' movements and volunteer groups—previously rare in Japan—have sprung up to campaign for people-friendly redevelopment and to help those who lost homes and communities, especially the elderly.

Nakamura Junko of the People's Help Network believes the role of volunteers is vital: "An earthquake leaves a place helpless. But even after a serious quake, the damage is very localized—one block may be devastated, the next OK—so if you have an established network of volunteer groups in neighboring towns, people can do a lot to help each other."

Whether or not Kobe's new way of thinking catches on may depend on people like Morikuri spreading the word. But there's a chance that the lessons of Kobe may hold a key to a new and more proactive way of living with earthquakes in Japan. ❖

***Catherine Rubinstein** is a freelance journalist based in London.*

• reclaimed land = 埋立地 *umetatechi* • paramount = 最優先の *saiyusen no*
• proactive = 事前策を講じた *jizensaku o kōjita*

セッカチくん
Sekkachi-kun

by 田中しょう / **Tanaka Shō**

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1

Boss: え～、みなさん! うちの 会社 も 他社 を 見習って 金曜日 は
E~, minasan! Uchi no kaisha mo tasha o minaratte kin'yōbi wa
(interj.) everyone our company also other companies (obj.) imitate-and Friday as for
ノーネクタイデー に 決まりました。
nō nekutai dē ni kimarimashita.
no necktie day to/as has been decided
"Ahh, gentlemen! Our company has decided to fall in step with other companies and designate Friday as 'No Necktie Day.'" (PL3)

- *ē* is a pause/hesitation sound, like "uhh/well/let's see."
- *minasan* used as a term of address before a group is similar to "ladies and gentlemen"—though perhaps not quite as formal.
- *uchi* literally means "within/inside," but in many cases it's used to mean "our house/shop/company." *Uchi no* means "of/belonging to our house/shop/company," or simply, "our" → *uchi no kaisha* = "our/this company."
- *ta* = "other," and *-sha* is often short for "company" in combinations, so *tasha* = "other companies."
- *minaratte* is the *-te* form of *minarau* ("follow the example [of]/imitate").
- *kimarimashita* is the PL3 past form of *kimaru* ("be decided/settled"). The particle *ni* often marks what was decided.

2

Boss: 金曜日 は カジュアルな 格好 で 出社して下さい。
Kin'yōbi wa kajuaru na kakkō de shussha shite kudasai.
Friday as for casual appearance with come to work-(please)
"Please come to work in casual dress on Fridays." (PL3)

Sekkachi: カジアル って なん だ?
Kaji aru tte nan da?
fire exists/occurs (quote) what is
"What's '*kaji aru*' mean?" (PL2)

Coworker: さ、 さあ . . .
Sa- sā . . .
(stammer) (interj.)
"I-I don't know . . ." (PL2)

- *kajuaru* is a katakana rendering of the English "casual," and *kakkō* refers to one's external appearance, most commonly how one is dressed, so *kajuaru na kakkō* = "casual dress." *De* marks this as the means or manner of the following action. Sekkachi-kun has misheard the word as *kaji aru*.
- *shussha shite* is the *-te* form of *shussha suru*, which can mean either "go to work" or "come to work," depending on where the speaker is. *-Sha* again means "company," so the term is not used if one's workplace is a government office or school, and is generally not used for retailers and other small businesses either.
- *kudasai* after the *-te* form of a verb makes a relatively polite request; often it can be considered equivalent to "please."
- *tte* here is a colloquial equivalent of the quotative *to iu no wa*, which could be literally translated "as for what he called/termed."
- *nan* is a contraction of *nani* ("what"); asking a question with a question word plus *da* is very informal and mostly masculine. A female speaker is more likely to use just the question word with the intonation of a question: *Kaji aru tte nani?*
- *sā* when replying to a question indicates ignorance or uncertainty regarding the answer.

3

Boss: やあ、 おはよ。
Yā, ohayo.
(greeting) (greeting)
"Hey, mornin'." (PL2)

Coworker: おはようございます。
Ohayō gozaimasu.
(greeting)
"Good morning." (PL3-4)

- *yā* is used as an informal "hi/hello" by male speakers.
- *ohayo* is a short, informal version of *ohayō gozaimasu*, which is the traditional "good morning" greeting. Though *gozaimasu* generally belongs to PL4 speech and sounds very formal and polite, its feeling in *ohayō gozaimasu* can range down to a quite informal PL3, or in various forms of contraction, even to PL2.

4

On back: 消防
Shobō
firefighting
Firefighter

Sekkachi: どーでえ? 火事有る だろう?
Dō dē? Kaji aru daro?
how is it? fire exists/occurs right?
"Whaddaya think? There's a fire, eh?" (PL2)

Coworker: 全然 ちがう と 思います。
Zenzen chigau to omoimasu.
completely different/wrong (quote) think
"I think that's completely wrong."
"I don't think you quite get it." (PL3)

Boss: お前 なあ . . .
Omae nā . . .
you (colloq.)
"Let me explain . . ." (PL2)

- *shōbō*, written with the kanji for "extinguish" and "prevent," refers to "firefighting." He is wearing a traditional firefighter's coat attire generally associated more today with neighborhood rowdies than with (even casually dressed) office workers.
- *dō dē* is a slurred *do dai*, which is equivalent to *dō da*. This use recalls the dialect of the Edokko, natives of Tokyo's old "downtown" (*shitamachi*) area, which goes along with the wearing of the traditional firefighter's coat. *Dō da* literally asks "what/how is it?"—often meaning "what do you think of this/that?" or "how does this/that grab you?"
- *kaji*, combining the kanji for "fire" and "thing/situation/incident," refers to destructive fires, and *aru* = "exists/occurs," so *kaji aru* literally means "there's a fire/a fire occurs." It doesn't really make sense here, the artist is merely reaching a long way for a pun with *kajuaru*—an effect that cannot be reproduced in English.
- *chigau* literally means "differs/is different," but often implies "is wrong/mistaken/a misunderstanding."
- *omoimasu* is the PL3 form of *omou* ("think").
- *omae* is a rough/informal word for "you"; *omae nā* introduces a statement intended to correct the listener.

セッカチくん
Sekkachi-kun

by 田中しょう / **Tanaka Shō**

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1 **Sekkachi**: あ、 もしもし… / 課長 ですか?
A, moshi-moshi… / kachō desu ka?
(interj.) hello section chief is it?
"Uh, hello . . . Chief?" (PL3)

- *moshi-moshi* is the standard way for the person initiating a phone call to say "hello."
- *kachō* is literally "section chief," roughly equivalent to "manager" in US corporate structure.

2 **Kachō**: なんだ、お前 か…
Nan da, omae ka…
what is you (?)
"Oh, it's you . . ." (PL2)

Kachō: ああ、今 みんな 出はらってて、ワシ ひとり だけ だ が。
Ā, ima minna deharattete, washi hitori dake da ga.
yeah now everyone is out/away-and I/me one person only is but
"Yeah, everyone's out right now, and I'm the only one here." (PL2)

- *nan da* (literally, "what is it?") at the beginning of a sentence often expresses letdown. Here it gives the feeling of "Oh, it's only you."
- *omae* is an informal/abrupt word for "you" used mostly by males with their peers or subordinates.
- *deharattete* is a contraction of *deharatte ite*, the *-te* form of *deharatte iru* ("are all out"), from *deharau* ("all go out").
- *washi* is a word for "I/me" used mostly by middle-aged and older men.
- the standard counter suffix for people is *-nin*, but the first two are irregular: "1 person" = *hitori*, and "2 people" = *futari*.
- *ga* ("but") at the end of the sentence here implies something like "but why do you ask?"

3 **Sekkachi**: じゃあ… 課長 に たのむ しかない っすね…
Jā, kachō ni tanomu shika nai ssu ne.
in that case section chief to/of request have not but to (colloq.)
"In that case, I have no choice but to ask you, I guess." (PL3)

Kachō: 何 を?
Nani o?
what (obj.)
"Ask me what?" (PL2)

- *tanomu* means "ask/request [a favor]." He uses his listener's title here where an English speaker would use "you," so *kachō ni tanomu* = "ask you."
- *shika* + a negative (*nai* or the *-nai* form of a verb/adjective) basically means "only"; *shika nai* after a verb implies that doing that action is the only option: "have no choice but to [do the action]."
- *ssu* is an informal contraction of *desu*, so *nai ssu* = *nai desu*, an alternate PL3 form of *nai*. The more standard PL3 form of *nai* is *arimasen*.

4 **Kachō**: ホラ、 持ってきてやった ぞ! どこ だ?!
Hora, motte kite yatta zo! Doko da?
here brought-and-came-(for you) (emph.) where are
"Here, I brought you some. Where are you?" (PL2)

Sekkachi: こっち です。 すいません ねー。 紙 が なくて…
Kotchi desu. Suimasen nē. Kami ga nakute…
this way is (thanks) (emph.) paper (subj.) not exist-(cause)
"Over here. Thanks very much. Because there was no toilet paper . . ."
"Over here. Thanks very much. There wasn't any paper left, so . . ." (PL2)

- *hora* is used to call a person's attention to something, like "here/look/see."
- *motte kite* is the *-te* form of *motte kuru* ("bring," from *motsu*, "hold/carry," and *kuru*, "come"). *Yatta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *yaru* ("give"), which after the *-te* form of another verb means "[do/did the action] for you."
- using a question word plus *da* to ask a question is mostly masculine
- *suimasen* is a contraction of *sumimasen*, which can mean either "sorry/excuse me" or "thank you," depending on the context.
- *nakute* is the *-te* form of *nai* ("not exist/have"), here being used to state the reason for the requested favor.

ポンポコ社長

Ponpoko Kachō

President Ponpoko

by はしもといわお / **Hashimoto Iwao**

Title: 家事 手伝い
Kaji Tetsudai
household matters/chores helping
Helping Around the House

- *kaji* refers to "homemaking chores"—the traditional duties of housewives
- *tetsudai* is the noun form of *tetsudau* ("help/assist").

1

Man: 花子さん、 何 を されている んですか?
Hanako-san, nani o sarete iru n desu ka?
(name-hon.) what (obj.) are doing (explan.-?)
"What do you do, Miss Hanako?" (PL4)

Woman: ハイ、 かじ 手伝い を...
Hai, kaji tetsudai o.
yes household chores helping (obj.)
"I've been helping out at home." (PL3 implied)

- *sarete iru* is the progressive ("is/are ～ing") form of *sareru*, a PL4 honorific form of *suru* ("do"). The context is obviously an *o-miai* (a formal meeting between the prospective bride and groom in an arranged marriage), so "What are you doing?" is a question about her occupation → "What do you do?"
- *hai* (lit., "yes") can be used like this to acknowledge a question even when it is not a yes-or-no question. It serves as a momentary pause or "warm-up" while the speaker prepares to answer.
- *o* marks *kaji tetsudai* ("helping around the house") as the object of the implied verb, *shite imasu*, PL3 form of *shite iru* ("am doing"), from *suru*.

2

Man (thinking): フーン、、 家庭的な 人 なんだ な--
Fūn, katei-teki na hito na n da na.
(interj.) home/family-oriented person (explan.) (colloq.)
Hmm, she's a family-oriented person, I guess.
Hmm, she'll make a good housewife and mother.
(PL2)

- *fūn* is an interjection expressing understanding of or interest in what has been said: "Oh?/Is that so?/Really?/Hmm, I see."
- *～na n da na* when speaking to oneself is often like "It's ～, I guess/I suppose/it seems."

3

Sound FX: ウ～ウ～
U– u–
(sound of sirens)

4

Man: 町内 消防団 に 入ってる のか...
Chōnai shōbō-dan ni haitteru no ka.
town/community firefighting brigade is in (explan.-?)
"Is it that she's in the community fire brigade?"
"Oh, she meant she belongs to the community fire brigade . . ." (PL2)

Sign: 春 の 火災 訓練
Haru no kasai kunren
spring of fire training/drill
Spring Fire Drill

- *chōnai* can refer either to an entire town or to a neighborhood.
- *shōbō*, written with the kanji for "extinguish" and "prevent," refers to "firefighting," and *-dan* = "group/corps/brigade."
- *haitteru* is a contraction of *haitte iru* ("is in"), from *hairu* ("enter/go into," or with groups, "become a member").
- *～ no ka* literally asks "Is it that ～?" but often the question is purely rhetorical and the feeling is more like "Oh, so it's that ～."
- *kasai* combines the kanji for "fire" and "calamity" to make a word that refers to destructive fires. A synonym is *kaji* (火事), written with the kanji for "fire" and "thing/situation/incident."
- normally, *kaji tetsudai* is written as in the title and can only mean "helping with household chores," but writing *kaji* in kana allows a double meaning and sets up a pun: "helping with fires."

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ポンポコ社長

Ponpoko Kachō

President Ponpoko

by はしもといわお / **Hashimoto Iwao**

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Title: 多国籍
Takokuseki
many/multiple nationalities
Multinational

- *takokuseki* is literally "many nationalities," but it's also used as the modifier "multinational."

1 **Sound FX**: ゴホン ゴホン
Gohon gohon
Cough cough (effect of coughing fit)

- a single *gohon* can be a relatively gentle cough or just the sound of a person clearing his or her throat, but doubling it up usually implies a more powerful fit of coughing—as the illustrations show.
- the long nose indicates that he is a Westerner.

2 **Sound FX**: ゴホン ゴホン
Gohon gohon
Cough cough

3 **Visitor**: 風邪 が はやってる みたい ですねー。
Kaze ga hayatteru mitai desu nē.
colds (subj.) are flourishing/going around appears (colloq.)
"It appears colds are flourishing, doesn't it."
"There seems to be a bug going around." (PL3)

いろんな 人 が せき を してます よ。
Ironna hito ga seki o shitemasu yo.
various/diverse people (subj.) coughing (obj.) are doing (emph.)
"All kinds of people are coughing." (PL3)

- 風 (*kaze*) means "wind," but the homophonous 風邪 (*kaze*) means "a cold."
- *hayatteru* is a contraction of *hayatte iru*, the progressive ("is/are ～ing") form of *hayaru* ("flourish"); when speaking of a disease, *hayatte iru* means "has broken out/is going around."
- *mitai da/desu* after a verb means "it seems/appears that ～."
- *ironna* is a contraction of *iroiro na* ("various/diverse"). *Ironna hito* = "diverse people."
- *seki* is a noun for "cough/coughing," and *seki o suru* is its verb form (lit., "do a cough"). *Shitemasu* is a contraction of *shite imasu*, PL3 form of *shite iru*, from *suru* ("do").

4 **Host**: うち は 多国せき 企業 です から
Uchi wa takoku seki kigyō desu kara.
we as for many-nation coughing corp. is/are because/so
"It's because we're a multinational coughing corporation." (PL3)

Sound FX: ゴホン ゴホン
Gohon gohon
Cough cough

- *uchi* literally means "inside/within" but is used frequently to refer to one's own house/family, company, or other group. Here it means "our company" → "we."
- the punch line is an untranslatable pun on the Japanese word for "multinational corporation": *takokuseki kigyō* (多国籍企業). *Seki* (籍) refers to a "register/registry" indicating residence or membership in a place or group, so *kokuseki* (国籍) is literally "nation of registry" → "nationality." Replacing 籍 with the homonym that means "cough" (the kanji for this *seki* is 咳, but the word is written in kana here in order to allow for both meanings) creates a word that can be rendered something like "many-nations coughing corporation" or "multinational coughing corporation."

ボクちん優等生

Boku-chin Yūtōsei

I'm an Honor Student!

by きたみ次郎 / **Kitami Jirō**

1

Boy: みんなー、もってきた かー?!
Minnā, motte kita kā?
everyone brought (?)
"Everybody! Did you bring 'em?!" (PL2)

Arrow: オモチャ の 双眼鏡
Omocha no sōgankyō
toy (mod.) binoculars
Toy binoculars

Others: オ〜!!
O〜!!
(exclam.)
"Yeah!" (PL2)

- *motte* is the *-te* form of *motsu* ("hold") and *kita* is the plain/abrupt past form of *kuru* ("come"), so *motte kita* = "brought," or in a question, "did you bring?"
- *no* makes *omocha* into a modifier for *sōgankyō* ("binoculars").
- *ō* is an exclamation of approval or affirmation.

2

Boy: それでは バードウォッチング に しゅっぱーつ!!
Sore de wa bādo-uotchingu ni shuppātsu!
then/well then birdwatching to departure
"Then let's go birdwatching!" (PL2)

- *bādo-uotchingu* is a katakana rendering of "birdwatching."
- *shuppatsu* ("departure") is an "action noun," which can be made into a verb by adding *suru* ("do"). Shouting an action noun by itself can have the effect of a command, or, if the speaker will also participate in the action, of "let's ~." *Ni* marks *bādo-uotchingu* as the destination or objective.

3

Boy: オッ、あそこ にいた!!
O!, asoko ni ita!
(interj.) that place at existed
"All right! There they are!"
"All right! I see some over there!" (PL2)

- *o!* is an interjection used when you have just noticed something good/desirable/pleasing.
- *asoko* is used to refer to a place that is separated from both the speaker and the listener. The place where the listener is (or a place close to him/her) would be *soko* ("there"), and the place where the speaker is (or a place close to him/her) would be *koko* ("here").
- *ita* is the plain/abrupt past form of *iru* ("exist/be in a place" for humans and other animate beings). In this case, *ni* marks the place of existence.

4

Boys: 文鳥。 / インコ。 / ジュウシマツ
Bunchō. / Inko. / Jūshimatsu.
Java sparrow / parakeet / (bird name)
"A Java sparrow! / A parakeet! / A *jūshimatsu*!" (PL2)

Sign & hat: ペットショップ / ペット
Petto shoppu / Petto
Pet Shop / Pet

Shopkeeper: どっか ほか いって やってくれない かな?
Dokka hoka itte yatte kurenai ka na?
somewhere other go and do-(request) won't you?
"I wonder if you couldn't do that somewhere else?" (PL2)

- all three kinds of birds are favorites as pet birds in Japan. *Jushimatsu* is a bird of about 4 inches, somewhat smaller than a sparrow.
- *dokka* is a contraction of *dokoka* ("somewhere").
- *hoka* here is shorthand for *hoka no tokoro* ("other/different place"), so *dokka hoka* = "somewhere else."
- *itte* is the *-te* form of *iku* ("go"); this *-te* form is acting as a continuing form: "go [somewhere else] and ~."
- *yatte* is the *-te* form of *yaru* (an informal word for "do"), and *kurenai ka na* after the *-te* form of a verb makes an informal request, like "I wonder if you wouldn't/couldn't ~?"

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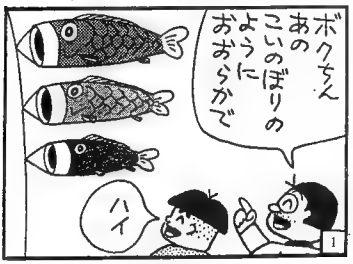
ボクちん優等生

Boku-chin Yūtōsei

I'm an Honor Student

by きたみ次郎 / **Kitami Jirō**



1 **Father**: ボクちん、あの こいのぼり のように おおらか で、...
Boku-chin, ano koinobori no yō ni ōraka de, . . .
I/me-(dim.) that carp streamer like magnanimous be-and
"Son, [become] as bighearted as those carp streamers, . . ."
[See 3rd frame]

Son: ハイ。
Hai.
yes
"Uh-huh." (PL3)

- *boku* is an informal "I/me" used by males, but *boku-chan* (or *boku-chin*) is a diminutive nickname for small boys, so here it is like "you" → "son."
- *koi* = "carp," and *nobori* = "banner/streamer"; on Children's Day (May 5), families with boys fly carp streamers on tall poles. The carp are a symbol of success. May 5 was traditionally a festival for boys, the counterpart to the Dolls Festival for girls on March 3. It was renamed Children's Day and became a national holiday in 1948, but the observances continue to center on boys.
- *de* here is essentially a continuing form of *desu* ("is/are"). The father's sentence continues through the next two frames.

2 **Father**: そして この 五月 人形 のように たくましく、. .
soshite kono gogatsu ningyō no yō ni takumashiku, . . .
and this May doll like strong/robust
"and as robust as this May Doll, . . ."
[See next frame]

Son: ハイ
Hai.
yes
"Uh-huh." (PL3)

- *gogatsu ningyō* (literally, "May dolls") refers to dolls put on display for Children's Day. Most typically they are dolls of samurai warriors, but *Momotarō* ("Peach Boy") and *Kintaro* ("Golden Boy"), folktale heroes known for their great prowess, are also quite popular. This one, carrying an ax over his shoulder, appears to be *Kintaro*.
- *takumashiku* is the adverb form of *takumashii* ("strong/robust/stalwart"); *takumashiku naru* = "become strong/robust"

3 **Father**: そして さらに この カシワモチ のように
soshite sara ni kono kashiwa-mochi no yō ni
and in addition this (food name) like
味 の ある 男 になる んだ よ。
aji no aru otoko ni naru n da yo.
flavor (subj.) has man become (explan.) (emph.)
"and also become a man who's as flavorful as this *kashiwamochi*."
"Son, I want you to grow up to be as bighearted as those carp, . . . as robust as this Children's Day Doll, . . . and as full of 'flavor' as these *kashiwamochi*." (PL2)

- *kashiwamochi* are pounded-rice cakes filled with sweet bean jam and wrapped in oak leaves (*kashiwa* = "oak"). They are a traditional part of Children's Day celebrations.
- *aji* = "flavor/taste," and *aji no aru* is a complete thought/sentence ("[he] has flavor/taste") modifying *otoko* ("man"). A person described as *aji no aru otoko/hito* isn't so much a "person of taste" as a "person with personality."

4 **Son**: 味 ない よ、 これ
Aji nai yo, kore.
flavor not have (emph.) this/these
"But they're tasteless—these *kashiwamochi*." (PL2)

Arrow: つくった 人
Tsukutta hito
made person
The person who made them

- *aji (no/ga) nai* ("has no flavor") is the negative of *aji no/ga aru* ("has flavor"). The syntax is inverted. *kore* is the topic, and normal order would be *kore (wa) aji ga nai.*
- *tsukutta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *tsukuru* ("make").

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HIROMI a long tall lady.

この女に賭ける

Kono Hito ni Kakero
— Bet on this Woman —

Conclusion

作・週良貨　Story • **Shū Ryōka**
画・夢野一子　Art • **Yumeno Kazuko**

In events preceding this episode, 30-year-old Harashima Hiromi is transferred from the head office of Yotsuba Bank to a failing branch office. Her new position is Commercial Services representative—essentially a door-to-door "salesperson" for the bank.

Kamiya

Harashima's unconventional ways and forthright manner are shocking to her new colleagues. A rivalry soon develops between her and Mr. Katō, the star of the Commercial Services department, who despite two years of work has not been able to land the Shinwa Enterprises account. When Harashima brashly accepts the challenge of landing Shinwa in only two months, the tension between them escalates.

She researches her region—and Shinwa—by spending a few weeks just getting to know the neighborhood. While doing so, she comes across some interesting gossip: the president of Shinwa, Mr. Kamiya, is an art aficionado who has two sons working for him, one of whom is the product of an extramarital affair.

In Harashima's first meeting alone with a Shinwa executive, she is warned that the president, Mr. Kamiya, is fiercely loyal to Marubishi, their current bank, and will never make the switch to Yotsuba. Then, on the way out, she bumps into Kamiya. Rather than talking business, she shrewdly questions him about his art collection based on a piece displayed in the lobby. This elicits an invitation to take a tour conducted by the vice president—Takahiko, Kamiya's legitimate son—who is in charge of the collection.

It's an important meeting, a chance to reach the president through his son, so Harashima takes great pains to convince the hostile but knowledgeable Katō to accompany her. During the tour, the two learn that Takahiko had been slated to take over business operations from his father, but unfortunately showed no aptitude for business. This led Kamiya to begin grooming his illegitimate son, Ryūichi (currently the General Manager of Shinwa), for the job.

Katō is stunned by Harashima's bold suggestion.

With this information in mind, Harashima enters the next meeting with a bombshell of a proposal: to have Takahiko, an art lover like his father, resign from Shinwa Enterprises and open a museum featuring Kamiya's extensive art collection. This would reduce the company's capital while effectively using the talents of both sons. Harashima and Katō are now left wondering if the surprised Kamiya will take her suggestion—and give Yotsuba his business.

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Preview Page

Here are some of the key vocabulary and grammar constructions found in the following story. We suggest previewing this section before you begin in order to prepare yourself for words, kanji, and patterns that are new to you. Many of these items do not appear again in the notes.

VOCABULARY

page 48

関係	*kankei*	relationship
心配する	*shinpai suru*	worry (*v.*)
信頼	*shinrai*	trust (*n.*)
経つ	*tatsu*	[time] passes

page 49

日頃	*higoro*	usually/habitually/always
情報	*jōhō*	information
築く	*kizuku*	build/construct
交換	*kōkan*	exchange (*n.*)
淋しい	*sabishii*	lonely
共に	*tomo ni*	together
つきあい	*tsukiai*	relationship/association

page 50

ふたりとも	*futari tomo*	both
表示する	*hyōji suru*	indicate/express
意思	*ishi*	intention/desire
後継者	*kōkeisha*	heir/successor
それぞれ	*sorezore*	each/respectively
提案	*teian*	proposal/suggestion

page 51

明るい	*akarui*	bright
引退	*intai*	retirement
たしかに	*tashika ni*	certainly/assuredly

page 52

設立する	*setsuritsu suru*	found/establish
指定する	*shitei suru*	designate/specify
ぜひ	*zehi*	by all means

page 53

案内する	*annai suru*	show/guide (*v.*)
不在	*fuzai*	not present
口座	*kōza*	bank account
応接室	*ōsetsu-shitsu*	reception room
ただ今	*tadaima*	at this moment

page 54

～体	*ittai*	(emphasizes question words)

page 54

何か	*nanika*	something

PATTERNS

- ～ものだ (～ *mono da*) "is something that ～"
- ～ことはできない (～ *koto wa dekinai*) "cannot ～"
- ～と信じる (～ *to shinjiru*) "believe that ～"
- ～にする (～ *ni suru*) "make [someone/something] into ～"
- ～通り (～ *dōri*) "[exactly] as/according to ～"
- A も B も (A *mo* B *mo*) "both A and B"
- ～のおかげ (～ *no okage*) "it is owing to/thanks to/as a result of ～"
- ～だの何だの (～ *da no nan da no*) "～ and whatever/and whatnot/and the like"

KANA QUICK REFERENCE

When a small circle is added to the upper right corner of the H-syllables, the first letter changes to a P-sound (e.g. は ▸ ぱ = ha ▸ pa*).*

When the "voicing mark" (two lines that look like a double-quote mark) is added to the same position on K-, S-, T-, and H-syllables, the following sound changes occur: K → G, S → Z, T ▸ D, and H ▸ B (e.g. こ → ご = ko ▸ go*).*

The irregular consonants in shi, chi, *and* tsu *make their voiced equivalents irregular as well:* し → じ = shi → ji, ち → ぢ = chi ▸ ji, *and* つ → づ = tsu ▸ zu.

Hiragana

あ	A	か	KA	さ	SA	た	TA	な	NA	は	HA	ま	MA	や	YA	ら	RA	わ	WA	ん	N
い	I	き	KI	し	SHI	ち	CHI	に	NI	ひ	HI	み	MI			り	RI				
う	U	く	KU	す	SU	つ	TSU	ぬ	NU	ふ	FU	む	MU	ゆ	YU	る	RU				
え	E	け	KE	せ	SE	て	TE	ね	NE	へ	HE	め	ME			れ	RE				
お	O	こ	KO	そ	SO	と	TO	の	NO	ほ	HO	も	MO	よ	YO	ろ	RO	を	O		

Katakana

ア	A	カ	KA	サ	SA	タ	TA	ナ	NA	ハ	HA	マ	MA	ヤ	YA	ラ	RA	ワ	WA	ン	N
イ	I	キ	KI	シ	SHI	チ	CHI	ニ	NI	ヒ	HI	ミ	MI			リ	RI				
ウ	U	ク	KU	ス	SU	ツ	TSU	ヌ	NU	フ	FU	ム	MU	ユ	YU	ル	RU				
エ	E	ケ	KE	セ	SE	テ	TE	ネ	NE	ヘ	HE	メ	ME			レ	RE				
オ	O	コ	KO	ソ	SO	ト	TO	ノ	NO	ホ	HO	モ	MO	ヨ	YO	ロ	RO	ヲ	O		

Combinations

きゃ	KYA	しゃ	SHA	ちゃ	CHA	にゃ	NYA	ひゃ	HYA	みゃ	MYA	りゃ	RYA
きゅ	KYU	しゅ	SHU	ちゅ	CHU	にゅ	NYU	ひゅ	HYU	みゅ	MYU	りゅ	RYU
きょ	KYO	しょ	SHO	ちょ	CHO	にょ	NYO	ひょ	HYO	みょ	MYO	りょ	RYO
キャ	KYA	シャ	SHA	チャ	CHA	ニャ	NYA	ヒャ	HYA	ミャ	MYA	リャ	RYA
キュ	KYU	シュ	SHU	チュ	CHU	ニュ	NYU	ヒュ	HYU	ミュ	MYU	リュ	RYU
キョ	KYO	ショ	SHO	チョ	CHO	ニョ	NYO	ヒョ	HYO	ミョ	MYO	リョ	RYO

1 **Kamiya**:
1週間経ちましたね。
"A week has passed, hasn't it."
"Well, it's been a week." (PL3)

- 1週間 is literally "one-week period"; 週間 is the counter suffix for weeks.
- 経ちました is the PL3 past form of 経つ ("[time] passes").

2 **Harashima**:
はい。
"Yes." (PL3)

Harashima:
社長がご心配なさっているのは丸菱との信頼関係ですね。
"What you are worried about is the relationship of trust with Marubishi, isn't it."
"You're concerned about your long-standing relationship with Marubishi, aren't you." (PL3-4)

- 社長 combines the second kanji of 会社 ("company") with the suffix meaning "head/chief/leader" of a group, 長, to give the meaning "company president/owner." Japanese workers traditionally address their superiors by title rather than by name—including those from other companies. Here she uses 社長 in a situation where an English speaker would say "you."
- ご心配なさっている is a PL4 honorific equivalent of 心配している ("is/are worrying"), from 心配する ("worry").
- の makes 社長がご心配なさっている act as a single noun, and は marks that noun as the topic of the sentence: "as for what the president/you are worrying about, . . "
- 信頼 = "reliance/confidence/trust," and 関係 = "relationship"; 信頼関係 refers to the comfortable and trusting working relationship Shinwa Enterprises and Marubishi Bank have built up over the years.
- と marks 丸菱 as the party with whom the relationship exists, and の makes the phrase 丸菱と ("with Marubishi") into a modifier for 信頼関係 → "relationship of trust that is with Marubishi."

1 Kamiya:
そうですね。メインバンクとのつきあいは長い時間をかけて築くものだ。
"It is that way. A relationship with one's main bank is something that one builds up over a long period of time."
"Well, a great deal of time is spent building up a relationship with one's main bank." (PL2)

- そうです is literally "it is that way/it is so/yes," but adding ね tends to make it a less straightforward affirmation; here it can be thought of as mainly a warm-up word: "Well, . . ."
- メインバンク is a katakana rendering of the English "main bank."
- つきあい refers to a "relationship/association" of some kind—here of doing business. と marks the party with whom the speaker/subject does business, and の makes the phrase メインバンクと into a modifier for つきあい → "relationship that is with one's main bank."
- かけて is the *-te* form of かける, and the expression 時間をかける means "spend time [at something]"; the *-te* form is being used here to indicate the means/manner of the next-mentioned action, 築く ("build/construct"). 長い時間をかけて築く is a complete thought/sentence ("[one] builds [it] by expending a lot of time") modifying もの ("thing").

Harashima:
私たちは時間を買うことはできません。
"We cannot buy time."
"We cannot buy what only time can bring." (PL3)
しかし、短いおつきあいの中でも信頼を高め合うことはできるはずです。
"But we should be able to mutually raise trust even within a short relationship."
"But even in a short time, we should be able to build mutual trust." (PL3)

- できません is the PL3 negative form of できる ("can do"). ことができる after a non-past verb is equivalent to the potential form of that verb, "can [do the action]."
- 高め is the stem of 高める ("raise/elevate/increase"), and 合う after the stem of a verb implies the action is a mutual/reciprocal one.
- はず is a noun referring to "normal expectations"—the way something ought to be; after a verb it means that the action can be expected to occur.

2 Harashima:
日頃からお互いを信頼し、情報交換を行えば、必ず共に歩んで行けると信じます
"If we always trust one another and exchange information, I believe we can definitely walk together."
"If we maintain mutual trust and open lines of communication, I am sure we can walk together into the future." (PL3)

2 *(continued)*

- 日頃 = "usually/habitually/always."
- 互い (often with the honorific prefix お) means "each other."
- 信頼し is the stem form of the verb 信頼する ("trust/have confidence in"); the stem here acts as a continuing form that links to the next action: "trust and . . ."
- 行えば is a conditional ("if") form of 行う ("do/conduct/carry out").
- 必ず = "certainly/definitely/without fail"
- 歩んで is the *-te* form of 歩む ("walk"), and 行ける is the potential ("can/be able to") form of 行く ("go"). A form of 行く after the *-te* form of a verb often implies the action will proceed into the future.
- と is quotative and 信じます is the PL3 form of 信じる ("believe") → ～と信じます = "believe that ～."

3 Kamiya:
あなたは私を淋しい男にしてくれた。
"You have made me a lonely man." (PL2)

- 淋しい = "lonely."
- して is the *-te* form of する, and ～にする = "make [something/someone] into ～"; くれた is the plain/abrupt past form of くれる, which after the *-te* form of a verb implies the action is done by someone else either to or for the speaker.

1 Kamiya:

私のふたりの息子は、あなたの提案通り、ふたつの道の後継者としてそれぞれ意思表示しましたよ。

"My two sons, exactly according to your proposal, have each indicated their intention to become my successors along the two separate paths."

"My two sons have indicated their desire to do exactly as you suggested, each of them succeeding to a different part of my legacy." (PL3)

- 私 = "I/me" and あなた = "you"; in each case, adding の makes the word possessive: "my" and "your."
- ふたり is the counter for "two persons," and ふたつ is a generic counter, like "two items." Counters more typically follow the item being counted; when they precede the item and are linked with の, it implies that the several items are in some sense thought of as belonging to a single group or unit.
- 提案 = "proposal/suggestion," and 通り is a suffix meaning "(exactly) as/according to"; 提案通り = "exactly according to the proposal" → "exactly as you suggested."
- として = "as."
- それぞれ = "each/respectively."
- 意思 = "intention/desire," and 表ポ = "indication/expression"; しました is the PL3 past form of する, which makes 意思表示 a verb: 意思表示する = "indicate/express one's intention."

2 Kamiya:

そして、ふたりとも、新しいメインバンクをあなたのところにしたいと言っている。

"And they both say they wish to make your place their new main bank." (PL2)

- -とも when speaking of two items means "both"; when speaking of three or more items, it means "all."
- 新しい = "new."
- ところ = "place," so あなたのところ = "your place" here referring to her workplace, of course, rather than her home.
- したい is the "want to" form of する ("do/make"); ～にする here means "make it ～" in the sense of making a choice or a change.
- いっている is from いう ("say"). と is quotative, marking the complete thought/sentence 新しいメインバンクをあなたのところにしたい ("[they] want to make [their] new main bank your place") as the content of what they are saying.

3 Katō & Harashima:

ありがとうございます。

"Thank you very much." (PL3-4)

1 Kamiya:

新しい形ができれば、シンワも神谷の家もその将来は明るいものになるのだろう。

"When the new shape is created, as for both Shinwa Enterprises and the house of Kamiya, I suppose their futures will become bright."
"When the new structure is in place, I imagine the future will be brighter for both Shinwa Enterprises and the Kamiya family." (PL2)

- 形 = "shape," and できれば is a conditional ("if/when") form of できる ("be made/become ready"), so 新しい形ができれば is literally "when the new shape is created."
- ～も～も = "both ～ and ～."
- 家 = "house/family."
- 将来 = "future"; 将来 is used when referring to the future of someone/something in particular, while 未来 is used for more abstract references to "the future."
- 明るい = "bright," もの = "thing," and になる = "become," so 明るいものになる is literally "become a bright thing."
- ～のだろう = "It's probably/I suppose it's the case that ～."

Kamiya:

たしかに企業家としてはうれしいが、私の引退も見えてしまった。

"As a businessman, that's certainly gratifying. Yet at the same time, my own retirement has come into sight." (PL2)

- たしかに = "certainly/definitely/assuredly."
- 企業 = "business/enterprise," and 企業家 = "entrepreneur/businessman/industrialist." The suffix 家 (read か) after certain nouns can denote a person engaged in or specializing in the associated activity.
- として = "as."
- うれしい = "glad/happy" or "gratifying."
- が = "but/yet."
- 引退 = "retirement."
- 見えて is the *-te* form of 見える ("can see/is in view"), and しまった is the plain/abrupt past form of しまう ("end/finish/put away"), which after the *-te* form of a verb implies the action is or was unintended, unexpected, or undesirable.

2 Kamiya:

あなたのおかげですよ、原島さん。

"All thanks to you, Ms. Harashima." (PL3)

- おかげ essentially refers to "indebtedness" (the お- is honorific, but cannot be dropped in this use), and ～のおかげだ/です means "it is owing to/thanks to/as a result of ～." Expressions containing おかげ can be used both for giving credit and assigning blame (much as "thanks to ～" can be in English), so in this case it serves as both genuine thanks (for what she has done for Shinwa and his family) and a touch of complaint (for hurrying him toward retirement).

3 Harashima:

社長、...

"Sir, ..."

- Japanese speakers address their listeners by title a good deal more than English speakers, especially when the listener is of a higher social status. In many cases the title can serve as the equivalent of "Sir/Ma'am."

1 Harashima:

第2シンワ商事を設立される時にはぜひ私どもをメインバンクにご指定下さい。

"... when you establish Shinwa Enterprises No. 2, please be sure to select us as *your* main bank as well." (PL4)

- 第 before a number means "No. ～."
- 設立 is a noun for "founding/establishing"; adding する makes it a verb. される is a PL4 honorific form of する.
- 第2シンワ商事を設立される is a complete thought/sentence ("[you] will found Shinwa Enterprises No. 2") modifying 時 ("time/time when" → "when"). に marks this as the time when another action takes place or will take place, and は marks that time as the topic of the sentence: "as for the time when you will found Shinwa Enterprises No. 2, . . ."
- ぜひ = "by all means."
- -ども turns nouns referring to people into plurals; it's humble when used to refer to one's own group, but condescending/insulting when used for others.
- ご指定下さい is a PL4 equivalent of the PL3 -て下さい request form, 指定してください ("please designate/specify/choose"), from the verb 指定する ("designate/specify").

2 Kamiya:

あはははは. . .

"A ha ha ha ha . . ."

Kamiya:

そうだな。そうさせてもらうよ。

"Yes, I'll do that." (PL2)

- そうだな is a PL2 equivalent of the affirmative response そうですね seen on page 49.
- させて is the *-te* form of させる, the causative form of する ("do"), and もらう ("receive") after the *-te* form of a verb implies the action is done as a favor to/for the benefit of the subject (in this case the speaker), so させてもらう turns into rather convoluted English when rendered literally: "[I] will receive the favor of being permitted to do." The causative form of a verb plus もらう is essentially just a humble way of saying one will do the action indicated by that verb.

3 Sign:

よつば銀行

Yotsuba Bank

4 Sign (over door):

よつば銀行台東支店

Yotsuba Bank, Taitō Branch

- 台東区 is the name of the ward in central Tokyo where Ueno and Asakusa are located—an old, merchant-class section of the city. 支店 means "branch store/office." so 台東支店 = "the Taito Branch."

1 Teller:

いらっしゃいませ。

"Welcome."

"May I help you?" (PL4)

Mrs. Kamiya:

口座をひとつ開きたいのだけど。

"I'd like to open an account." (PL2)

- いらっしゃいませ is a polite command form of the PL4 verb いらっしゃる ("come"). It's one of the standard expressions for welcoming customers to one's place of business, and it often serves the same function as "May I help you?" in English.

2 Sound FX:

どん!

Thud! (stacks of bills landing on counter).

Teller:

えっ!! どうぞ、応接室の方へご案内いたします

"What?! Please, I will show you to our receiving room."

"Goodness! Let me show you to a private room." (PL4)

Mrs. Kamiya:

ここでけっこうよ

"Here is fine." (PL2)

- ご案内いたします is a PL4 equivalent of 案内する ("show/guide [to someplace]").
- けっこう often replaces いい in the expression ～でいい ("～ is good enough/is fine").

3 Mrs. Kamiya:

ティッシュだの何だのいらないわ。

"I don't care for any tissues or whatever." (PL)

Teller:

恐れ入ります。

"I apologize."

"Certainly." (PL4)

- ティッシュ is a katakana rendering of the English "tissue [paper]"; Japanese banks regularly give out packages of tissue paper and other sundries as gifts to depositors.
- 恐れ入ります is the polite form of 恐れ入る, a PL4 expression that can be either an apology or a thank you depending on the context.

4 Mrs. Kamiya:

ところで、原島浩美さんて方いらっしゃる?

"By the way, is there someone named Harashima Hiromi here?" (PL4)

Teller:

原島は外回りですので、ただ今不在ですが

"Harashima is out making rounds and is not in the office at the moment." (PL3)

4 *(continued)*

- て is a colloquial equivalent of という ("called"), and 方 is a polite word for "person"; 原島浩美さんという方 = "person called Harashima Hiromi."
- いらっしゃる is also a PL4 equivalent of いる ("be present/be in a place").

5 Mrs. Kamiya:

そう。私、神谷隆彦の母でございます。息子をよろしくとお伝え下さいな。

"I see. I'm Kamiya Takahiko's mother. Please convey to her my best wishes on behalf of my son." (PL4)

- ～をよろしく(お願いします) is a standard formula spoken (or, as here, conveyed) to a person who is in a position to help/benefit members of one's group (i.e., family, office, class, etc.). It literally means "please take good care of/give favorable treatment to ～."
- お伝え下さい is a PL4 equivalent of 伝えて下さい ("please tell/convey").

6 Teller:

はあ.../ ありがとうございました

"Uhh, certainly . . . Thank you very much." (PL4)

1 **Mrs. Miyamoto**:

すみません。
"Excuse me." (PL3)

Teller:

いらっしゃいませ。
"Welcome."
"May I help you?" (PL4)

Mrs. Miyamoto:

口座を作りたいのですが。
"I'd like to open an account." (PL3)

2 **Sound FX**:

どん!
Thud!

Teller (thinking):

また...
Again . . .

3 **Mrs. Miyamoto**:

こちらに原島浩美さんとおっしゃる方はおられますか?
"Is there a person named Harashima Hiromi here?" (PL4)

Teller:

はあ、あの、原島は外回りで出かけております。
"Well, um, Harashima is out of the office on rounds." (PL4)

- こちら (literally, "this direction/side") is often just a polite way of saying ここ ("this place/here").
- おっしゃる is a PL4 honorific equivalent of いう, so ～とおっしゃる = ～という ("called ～"), and 原島浩美とおっしゃる方 = "a person called Harashima Hiromi."
- おられます is the polite form of おられる, a PL4 honorific equivalent of いる ("is present/is in a place" for people and other animate beings). か makes it a question: "is ～ present?"
- 出かけて is the *-te* form of 出かける ("go out"), and おります is a PL4 humble equivalent of いる; いる after the *-te* form of a verb can mean that the result of the action continues/remains in place, so 出かけております = "has gone out/is out." で marks 外回り (see above) as the cause for going out.

4 **Mrs. Miyamoto**:

さようでございますか。
"Is that so?"
"I see." (PL4)

Mrs. Miyamoto:

私、宮本龍一の母でございますが、息子がお世話になりますとお伝え下さい。
"I am Miyamoto Ryūichi's mother. Please thank her for her kind offices on behalf of my son." (PL4)

5 **Teller**:

ありがとうございました。
"Thank you very much." (PL4)

Teller (thinking):

なんなのよ、一体...
What in the world's going on? (PL2)

- なの after a question word asks for an explanation, and よ adds emphasis.
- 一体 is an emphasizer for question words: "(What) in the world?/(How) on earth?", etc. The syntax is inverted; in normal order, 一体 comes at the beginning.

4 *(continued)*

- さようでございますか is a very formal/polite equivalent of そうですか ("is that so?/I see").
- 世話 refers to "help/aid/favor," and なります is the PL3 form of なる ("become"). お世話になります is literally "[I/he] will become in your favor." This is another standard formula spoken or conveyed to one's benefactor when about to receive the benefit of his/her hospitality, guidance, help, etc., as a kind of thanks-in-advance. If the person about to receive the benefit/favor is someone other than the speaker, he/she must be specified as the subject, as 息子 is here.

1 **Proprietress**:

何(なに)かいいことあったのかい?

"Did something good happen?"

"Are you celebrating something?" (PL2)

- 何か = "something."
- いい = "good/fine," and こと = "thing": いいこと = "good/desirable/happy thing." が to mark this as the subject of the sentence has been omitted.
- あった is the plain/abrupt past form of ある ("exist/occur").
- の indicates she's asking for an explanation.
- かい is a colloquial か, for questions, but with a softer, friendlier feeling.

Harashima:

おばさんのおかげでね。いっしょに食(た)べて下(くだ)さいな。

"Thanks to you. Please eat together with me."

"Yes, thanks to you. Please join me." (PL3)

- おばさん ("aunt/auntie") can be used to refer to any woman older than oneself and past her mid-twenties or so. As with 社長 on page 48, Harashima uses the title おばさん here where an English speaker would use "you."
- 〜のおかげで = "owing to/thanks to 〜." ね adds light emphasis.
- いっしょに = "together [with me]."
- 食べて is the *-te* form of 食べる ("eat"), and 下さい after the *-te* form of a verb makes a polite request.
- な adds informal emphasis.
- this おばさん is the proprietess of a tea shop near Shinwa Enterprises, where Harashima stopped for a break after her first visit to the company. In that scene, おばさん strikes up a conversation with Harashima, and when Harashima reveals that she has just been to Shinwa on business, おばさん mentions that she grew up with the company president. Although the scene does not depict the details, the proprietress is apparently the source of Harashima's inside information about the Kamiya family (see episode 4, *Mangajin* No. 50), which helped her determine the best way to approach Shinwa.

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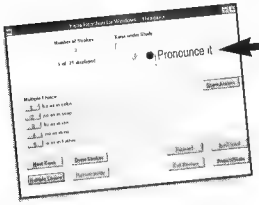

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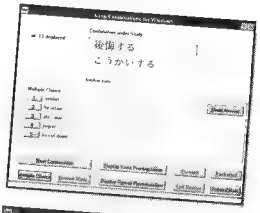

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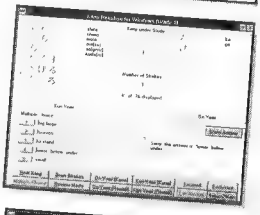

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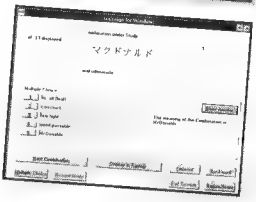

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AMECOMI

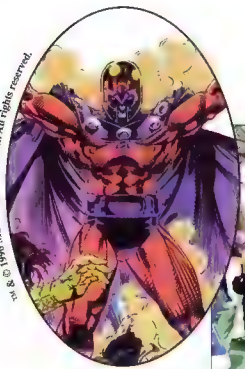
Japan's Latest Fad

by John Storey

Meet Cyclops, Wolverine, Storm, Rogue, and Gambit—just a few of the most successful American imports to invade Japan in the last two years. No, these aren't oddly named automobiles or cutting-edge computer games. These are the X-Men, part of the Marvel comics universe and currently the most widely read *amecomi*, as American comics in Japan are commonly referred to in abbreviated form.

Now, you're probably wondering why self-respecting Japanese citizens, with their advanced culture of manga, would deign to peruse such material as *X-Men*. "Japanese manga are so specialized, like 'horse-racing manga' and 'mahjong manga,' while *amecomi* are focused on superheroes and fantasy worlds. They're just more interesting," says Kaihō Norimitsu, a 22-year-old college student who fell in love with *X-Men* while vacationing in Michigan three summers ago. "Of course I have read manga, but I don't really like any of it."

Hashizume Toru, international publishing manager for Shogakukan Production, feels that *amecomi* fill a void in the traditional manga market. He readily admits that some manga, especially that of *Akira* creator Ōtomo Katsuhiro, are influenced by American comics. But he claims that there are three major differences between manga and *amecomi* that account for the latter's increasing popularity in Japan: "First, they are in full color. Second, the detail of the drawings is so realistic, almost like graphic art. And third, the stories are like nothing readers have ever experienced in manga." He clearly knows what he's talking about, since Shogakukan Production is



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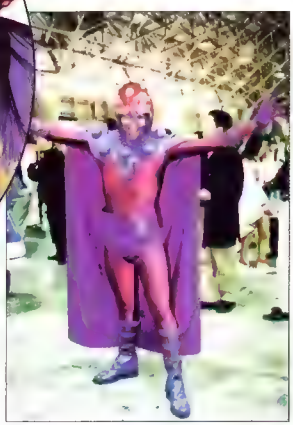


Magneto, arch enemy of the X-Men, as portrayed in the comic book (above) and by one of his fans (right).

An in-depth guide to X-Mansion, where the X-Men live. Detailed guides and explanations help Japanese readers stay on top of the complicated story line.

almost single-handedly responsible for the current *amecomi* boom.

FINDING A MARKET

Amecomi excitement first began building in May 1994, when Sho Pro—as Shogakukan Production is known in order to distinguish it from parent publisher Shogakukan—issued two mooks (magazine/book hybrids) as a test case containing portions of *X-Men* and *Spider-Man* stories along with in-depth explanations and character guides. Based on strong sales (the original 30,000 copies of each sold out and both are in their second printings), they began releasing a monthly *X-Men* series directly translated from the originals in November 1994.

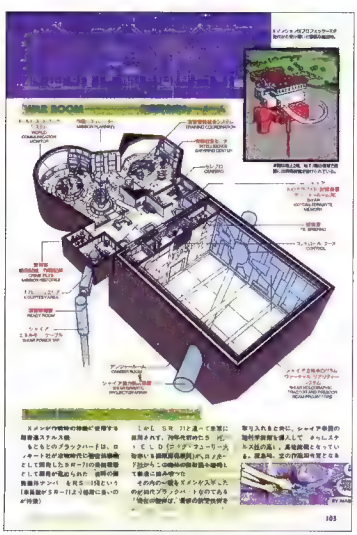
Each of the volumes, which have over 100 pages and sell for ¥980, contains three original stories translated into Japanese. In addition, Sho Pro editors include several explanatory pages to help readers keep up with the story, including an illustrated guide to the cast of characters, personality profiles, and detailed diagrams and layouts of X-mansion (where X-Men live and plan their activities). "American fans have been following *X-Men* for years, so they know what's going on," explains Hashizume. "But for new Japanese fans, this can be overwhelming, so we add a few extra bits at the end to enable them to grasp the story."

There are also footnotes at the bottom of some pages, which Hashizume says are a result of the laborious translation process. "We leave the drawings and the bubbles exactly as they are in the originals, so we are forced to fit the text in that set amount of space," he says. "But sometimes it's almost impossible, like when a simple 'No' in English needs to be translated as *'Ya, sonna koto shitakunai'* ['I don't want to do that']." Jokes also tend to pose problems, as do references to past episodes and events that only a die-hard fan would remember.

Readers so far seem content, however. The circulation stands at 25,000 per month, admittedly far below the million plus claimed by the more popular manga. But the publishers receive an astounding number of reader-response cards—an average of 5000–6000 per issue—which tells them they're doing something right. Current tallies indicate that 80 percent of readers are male, with the majority in the 17–27 age bracket. "We have gotten cards from readers as young as 10," Hashizume adds. "And we also got one from a 64-year-old man who had read *X-Men* back in the '60s and was ecstatic to find it again, this time in Japanese."

Kaihō, the college student introduced above, was so impressed with the series that he joined the production team as a translator. "When I came back from Michigan, I couldn't find very many comics here. I would search through the foreign bookstores in Yokohama and occasionally find one. But it would be quite expensive," he says. "Then I heard about the Marvel project, bought the first volume, and really got into it."

In addition to collecting the comic books, Kaihō also regularly visits the Comic Market fair, held twice a year in Tokyo. This event has seen a growing number of *amecomi*-related booths as well as more and more fans coming out and dressing up in their favorite character's costume. "I'm not into costume play myself," says Kaihō. "But there were a lot of X-



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Perhaps not as powerful but definitely cuter than the original X-Men: a Rogue impersonator on the left and a Cyclops clone on the right

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Men impersonators running about. Especially Gambit—he's the most popular here."

SECOND CHANCE

"When I first decided to go with publishing Marvel comics, my colleagues all told me to give it up, that it was a waste of time, that no Japanese would read them," says Sho Pro president Takayanagi Yoshiya. "Well, that convinced me that we should do it, even though past attempts at introducing *amecomi* to Japan had failed."

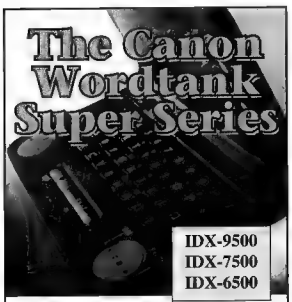
In the early 1970s, another publisher, Kōbunsha, had given *Spider-Man* a chance, but despite initial interest, sales lagged. "That was because they made two very big mistakes," says Takayanagi. "They hired a Japanese artist to redraw Spider-Man, and they failed to put the character in his cultural context. I feel that if you are going to bring *amecomi* here, you have to bring them as they are—as a part of American culture. You can't Japanize them, so to speak."

A large part of the success of *amecomi* this time around can also be traced to Sho Pro's marketing strategy. They timed the first release of the mooks to coincide with the television animation series of *X-Men* (on TV Tokyo from April 1994 to March 1995). And they have tied the comics into sales of figurines, character goods, and other merchandise, like computer games, T-shirts, and snowboarding fashion. Each volume of *X-Men* has several inserts with information on what new products are available and where to buy them. There is even a Sho Pro-produced *Spider-Man* television program in which the character reads the news and teaches a few key words in English.

"Sho Pro is actually a merchandising company," explains Takayanagi, "which is probably one of the main reasons we have been able to ignite the *amecomi* boom. When Marvel first approached Japanese publishers with the project, no one wanted to do it. But the parent company asked us to consider it, and we jumped at the chance—not only to publish the comics themselves but to nurture an *amecomi* culture as well." They have done what they set out to do, and their reputation precedes them. Lucas Films approached them to do for *Star Wars* what they had done for *X-Men,* and the three-volume set hit the stands in September 1995.

It looks as if the *amecomi* boom is here to stay this time. At least two other publishers are venturing into the market, and Sho Pro has plans to add *Spider-Man* and *Silver Surfer* to its monthly lineup soon, as well as develop an *amecomi* English-Japanese dictionary. "We're not worried about other publishers coming in," says Takayanagi. "It can only help to increase the popularity of the genre." ❖

***John Storey** is a freelance writer based in Tokyo.*



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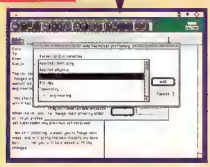

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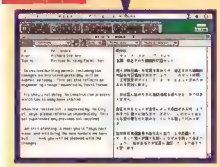

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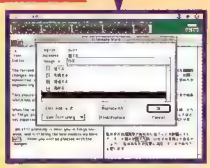

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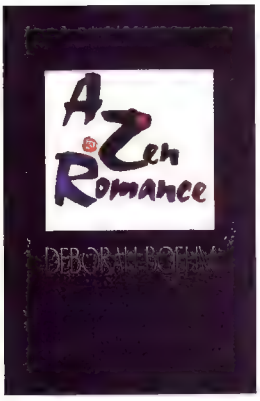
A Zen Romance

Deborah Boliver Boehm
Kodansha America, 1996



by Laura Silverman

Some writers of autobiographies have led fascinating lives. Others have a unique perspective and a knack for the written word that combine to make even ordinary life experiences resonate on the page. Still others are narcissists, so caught up in their own experiences and thought processes that they will share all of it, unannotated, with as large an audience as possible, even if it means writing a book to do it. Deborah Boliver Boehm has some interesting tales to tell in *A Zen Romance*—an autobiographical novel based on the journal Boehm kept while she was a student in Japan in the late 1960s –but for the most part, this author falls squarely in category three.

Intrinsically interesting are Boehm's firsthand experiences with Zen Buddhism, acquired by virtue of a series of fortuitous occurrences that culminate in her landing a summer apartment in Kyoto (she spends the school year in Tokyo) in a small temple that is part of a major Zen monastery. The parts of the book that focus specifically on Boehm's experiences at the monastery—in particular, the chapter that describes a week of intensive Zen training (*sesshin*)—make for engaging and informative reading. Deeply drawn to Zen and yet thoroughly Western in her attitudes and beliefs, Boehm struggles mightily in her impossible quest to understand enlightenment, but her perspective serves her well in her role as a journalist. Although she is hardly the first Westerner to write about Zen, she is unusual in that she does so as such a novice, and the results are somehow refreshing.

It is also in these sections, particularly the chapter about *sesshin*, that Boehm's writing becomes fluid and effortless, freed from a certain self-consciousness that pervades most of the rest of the book—perhaps an unwitting reflection of the fact that she is most able to be herself in the monastery, where the monks will not be impressed by airs. On the first day of *sesshin*, as Boehm is struggling to keep up with the many and varied rituals, she commits a terrible blunder at lunch. Famished from her rather grueling day of meditation and temple-scrubbing (a day which began at 3:00 a.m.), she requests a third helping of rice, which she is duty-bound to finish, before realizing that all of the other monks have bowed their heads in ritual refusal. She writes:

> I picked up my overflowing rice bowl and began to eat, while the lines of monks on both sides sat motionless and silent, hands folded in their laps, staring straight ahead. I was aflame with self-consciousness; every bite was torture, each rice grain looked as large as a meteorite, my chewing seemed to echo from the rafters, and no matter how fast I shoveled the rice into my mouth, the bowl seemed to remain full, like one of those self-replenishing milk jugs in the Biblical parables. . . .

If only Boehm had written up her experiences at the monastery as an extended series of articles and left it at that. But alas, this book is not just about Boehm's entry into the world of Zen; it is about everything that Boehm did and everything that she thought and every person that she met and every conversation that she had and every outfit that she wore and every meal that she made in the two-year period of her life that this book covers. In other words, Boehm is sharing her journal with us *in toto*, indeed fleshing it out, seemingly oblivious of the fact that the mundane details of her life might not be of interest to those of us who never met her and probably never will.

Boehm's concept of good writing seems partly to blame; it is as if she took a course at some point in her career that gave undue emphasis to the importance of detail in bringing characters and events to life. The book brims with extended descriptions of people who show up peripherally, never to be mentioned again, and lengthy explanations of events so tangential it's hard to understand why they were brought up at all. A smattering of overwrought metaphors (". . . the sky was filled with a bestiary of rose-and-violet clouds. An Afghan hound was fleeing from a spiny-backed sea monster, a charcoal bird with wings of smoke sat on the head of a sacred elephant, a kangaroo waltzed with a biped bear"), doubtless inserted to add even more color to the narrative, does not help matters.

But the real source of the problem is not Boehm's style;

it is her obsession with herself. The vast majority of the descriptions in this overly descriptive book are about Boehm—her features (blue eyes, long legs, "wild, voluminous hair"), her clothes (mostly purple and velvet), her writing, her art, her witty one-liners (with which most of the numerous conversations detailed in the book close), and so on. Perhaps this is to be expected in an autobiography, but one cannot help wondering, reading the fifteenth or so description à la Nancy Drew of one of Boehm's outfits (". . . I was wearing a cowl-collared dress of aubergine jersey with long, narrow sleeves, a circular skirt, buttons down the back, and a wide, tight belt . . ."), just why we should care.

Unfortunately, the same question occurs in regard to an important personal issue which Boehm is wrestling with throughout the book—her sexuality. Much of what Boehm describes revolves around the tension between her decision to remain a virgin (by "complex philosophical choice") and her boundless romantic desires. It is an interesting conflict in theory, but in practice, at least as practiced by Boehm, it is simply tiresome. Unwilling to have sex, but unable to keep her mind off it, she imagines a lurid affair lurking behind every chance encounter. But whenever she comes face to face with the real thing—for example, when she goes home with a man she has just met at a party and he assumes they will be spending the night together—she recoils in shock and revulsion. When she unwittingly walks in on three friends who have just been engaging in a *ménage à trois*, it is as if she had stumbled upon Satan's lair. Riding frantically away on her bike from the scene of debauchery, she can't stop thinking about "the greasy, unhygienic reality of a woman having sex with two men at the same time."

That sex between one man and one woman can be greasy and unhygienic never occurs to Boehm, and she continues, even after this traumatic event, to fantasize about the men in her midst. Perhaps not surprisingly, she is particularly drawn to the monks of the temple compound in which she lives, many of whom, she believes, are also secretly attracted to her: "With Saku-san I was certain, from the yearning way he sometimes looked at me, that there was an element of subjunctive boy-meets-girl in our casual friendship: a sense of what might have been, if things had been different"; "I felt that [Zan-san] saw me as Woman, perhaps even as Temptation, and there were times (like the day when he passed me on the slope and said, simply, 'Ah, it's you!') when I felt he might be wishing he were free to be man instead of paragon."

The sheer number of men who find themselves attracted to Boehm in *A Zen Romance*, including several Zen monks and a Jesuit priest, is enough to lead even the most generous reader to suspect a certain authorial self-delusion. Ironically, on the very first page of her book, discussing the impact of the *Tao te Ching* on flower-child sensibilities, she writes, "I sometimes mused, during those vertiginous times, that the covers of certain books should have been emblazoned with a cautionary cerebellum-and-crossbones and the warning: DANGER! NOT TO BE TAKEN LITERALLY!" She would have done well to mark her own book thus. ❖

Laura Silverman is managing editor of Mangajin.

On the Bookshelf

Japan Under Construction: Corruption, Politics, and Public Works, *by Brian Woodall. University of California Press, 1996. 214 pages, $28.00 (hardcover)*
The author interviewed contractors, industrial association officials, bureaucrats, politicians, journalists, and scholars to shed light on the extraordinary interdependence of Japan's construction industry and its politicians. This mutually protective relationship has contributed significantly to past tensions between the US and Japan—most notably in 1987, when foreign firms were forbidden to bid on the New Kansai International Airport project.

Hannah Riddell: An Englishwoman In Japan, *by Julia Boyd. Boston: Charles E. Tuttle Co., Inc., 1996. 215 pages, $16.95 (softcover)*
In 1891, a tall, imperious British missionary in Kumamoto was busily proselytizing to the "heathen" when one day she was abruptly drawn to a different mission: providing relief for some of Japan's thousands of leprosy victims. This work put her at odds with her fellow missionaries, who felt that saving souls took priority over healing bodies. Although devoted to her patients, Hannah Riddell was no cardboard do-gooder. Her strong personality brought her as much sorrow as it did joy, making for an entertaining life story.

101 Unuseless Japanese Inventions, *by Kenji Kawakami; translated by Dan Papia. New York: W.W. Norton, 1995. 158 pages, $10.95 (softcover)*
Artist Kawakami Kenji specializes in the art of *chindogu*, which he defines as the "un-useless idea." This book presents a collection of his humorous inventions—such as the "Fish Face Cover," for squeamish people who can't bear to look their dinner in the eye—all of which are functional but unlikely ever to be used. Or are they?

Voices from the Japanese Women's Movement, *edited by AMPO-Japan Asia Quarterly Review. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1996. 232 pages, $17.95 (softcover) or $54.95 (hardcover)*
A collection of 26 short commentaries and essays by women from all walks of Japanese life, collected as a contribution to the Beijing Women's Conference. A sampling of the wide variety of essay topics includes "Fighting Back Against Serving Tea," "Ten Years Under the Equal Employment Opportunity Law," "Japan's Pornographic Culture," "A Restaurant Run by Women," and "Lesbians and Sexual Self-Determination."

Japanese Residences and Gardens: A Tradition of Integration, *by Michio Fujioka, photographs by Kazunori Tsunenari. Kodansha International, 1995. 64 pages, $28.00 (hardcover)*
Illustrates with color and black-and-white photographs the beauty and versatility of traditional Japanese gardens.

BOOK BUYER'S GUIDE

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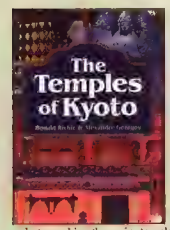

Celebrated and widely respected photographer Alexandre Georges and esteemed expert on Japan and Japanese culture Donald Richie team up in this exquisite exploration of the major temples and shrines in Kyoto, including Kinkaku-ji, Kiyomizu-dera, Byodo-in, Myoshin-ji, and many others. During a six-month tour of Japan, Georges concentrated on photographing the major temples and shrines in Japan's former capital, and the best of those beautiful, full-color images have been selected for this book. Donald Richie's essays on the history and legend surrounding each temple featured here result in a marvelous text that is a profound meditation on the meaning and relevance of Kyoto's temples.

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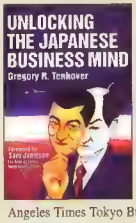

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The Mystery of Rampo

directed by Okuyama Kazuyoshi

by Terra Brockman

Samuel Goldwyn Co.

All that we see or seem
Is but a dream within a dream.
—Edgar Allen Poe

Life is but an illusion;
the dreams of a night are real.
—Edogawa Rampo

"I'm here again," says mystery writer Edogawa Rampo near the beginning of Okuyama Kazuyoshi's film *The Mystery of Rampo*, "in the semi-darkness of the woods." *Rampo* represents both the directorial debut of Okuyama, a prolific producer for Shōchiku (his father is president of the entertainment conglomerate), and the first coproduction between Hollywood and a major Japanese studio. It is an auspicious debut, in which Okuyama explores Rampo's "woods," delving into the Cimmerian gloom where the boundaries between reality and imagination dissolve.

Edogawa Rampo was the pen name of Hirai Tarō (1894-1965), the father of the Japanese mystery novel. The name is a Japanese homonym of Hirai's favorite writer, Edgar Allen Poe (edogā aran pō ‣ edoga[wa] ranpo). In 1923, an unemployed Rampo submitted a short mystery to a literary magazine. Its publication launched a remarkably successful career that spanned 40 years and resulted in 20 full-length books and numerous short stories and essays devoted to the mystery genre.

Details from Rampo's life and work serve as a jumping-off point for this film, which echoes Rampo's fascination with the melding of fact and fancy in the creative process. Okuyama and his cinematographer, Sakakibara Yasushi, skillfully combine a variety of media—animation, color, computer-generated images, and fascinating scenes from Japan in the 1920s on old, grainy, black-and-white fast-film stock—to create a gorgeous and thought-provoking work.

The film opens with clips of Tokyo in the 1920s and '30s: trams full of men and women in traditional and western dress; a zeppelin floating overhead; schoolboys playing with homemade swords and guns; young men and women learning western ballroom dances. The movie switches to color as the camera pans slowly through the rooms of Rampo's house, across shelves of books in French, Chinese, Japanese, and English, including most of Poe's works, and then to his desk where drops of ink fall from an old fountain pen and slowly spread, like blood, across the blotter.

After this lush introduction, the story begins in the richly textured, detailed animation for which Japan has become renowned. A writer pens a tale as it is enacted on screen (the kanji characters on the manuscript paper that overlays the animation were actually written by Rampo's son). The warmth and sensitivity of the animated scenes are reflected in the narrator's voice and provide a chilling contrast to the story.

We enter the story through the keyhole of a *nagamochi*, or hope chest, where, the narrator says, one's fondest memories and deepest fears are kept. It belongs to a woman named Osei, who is married to an invalid. One day while Osei is out, her husband climbs into the chest in a game of hide and seek with their two young boys, and the chest locks shut. By the time Osei returns (the boys have long since gone outside to play), he has nearly suffocated. She opens the chest, sees him, and then very deliberately closes it again. After the funeral, some console the widow whose husband died in "a terrible accident," while others whisper that she cleverly murdered him.

This is Rampo's novel *The Appearance of Osei*. In the first real "live action" scene of the film, we see government officials banning the novel "due to the portrayal of the heroine" while Rampo (Takenaka Naoto) and his editor, Yokomizo Seishi (Kagawa Teruyuki), look on helplessly. They go from the government offices to a party celebrating the release of a film version of one of Rampo's stories. Rampo, hopelessly ill at ease, flees the cacophony and phoniness of the party for the calm emptiness of the hotel lobby. Here he hears the tune from a music box and children calling in a game of hide and seek (*"mō ii kai," "māda da yo"*), the same sounds we heard in the animated sequence. Rampo knows he has crossed over into the world of the imagination even before he sees Osei, silent and ravishing in a black lace veil.

• auspicious = さい先のよい *saisaki no yoi* • blotter = 吸い取り紙 *suitori-gami* • suffocate = 窒息する *chissoku suru* • cacophony = 雑音 *zatsuon* • ravishing = 魅惑的な *miwaku-teki na*

Back at home, and in the "real world," Rampo is burning his banned manuscript page by page when Yokomizo stops by to show him a newspaper article headlined "Murder or Accident?" It tells of a woman who killed her invalid husband by suffocating him in a *nagamochi*. Says Yokomizo, "Her name is Shizuko. The woman you created is real."

Rampo cannot resist the temptation to find Shizuko (played by the lovely Hada Michiko, a top model who has appeared in countless print and TV ads as the "face" for Shiseido and who makes her acting debut in *Rampo*), who is now running her late husband's antique shop. As Rampo timidly enters the store, his gaze passes slowly over the old objects and stops at a small mirror reflecting a woman's feet and ankles. Discovering that Shizuko is identical to Osei, he is overcome with emotion. He becomes obsessed with her, perhaps as much by her mysterious beauty as by her resemblance to his heroine.

Rampo hurries home and, inspired by his murderess-muse, begins to feverishly write a sequel to his banned story. First he brings to life his alter ego, the handsome and valiant detective Akechi Kogorō (Motoki Masahiro), who is the central character in many of Rampo's novels. Akechi must rescue the mistress of Marquis Ogawara (played by one of Japan's leading stage actors, Hira Mikijirō), a stunningly beautiful woman who was taken in by the marquis after murdering her husband. The noble marquis is also a perverse transvestite, narcissist, and sadist, with an intractable Oedipal complex. Soon, Ogawara, Akechi, Rampo, and the mistress/Shizuko/Osei become trapped in a dangerous web of intrigue and desire.

The Mystery of Rampo is an exquisite sensory experience. Sakakibara's sumptuous cinematography, the spectacular sets and scenery, and the haunting, evocative score by Senju Akira (performed by the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra) give the film emotional resonance. The lushness and depth match the surreal aspects of the story as reality and imagination become increasingly intertwined.

As the film reaches its climax, imagination overtakes reality, and the creator loses control of his creation. The *nagamochi*, like all receptacles, symbolizes the feminine and the unconscious. Like Pandora's box, it also contains excessive, destructive potentialities. When the mistress asks Akechi to climb into her *nagamochi*, Rampo says, "You're not one to do that." But Akechi responds, "That's not for you to say."

When the two worlds finally collide, the mirror cracks, a wind whips up, and everything explodes and dissolves in a computer-generated fantasia of whirlpools, tunnels, chasms, and fire, a universe self-destructing and galaxies fragmenting as the chest tumbles into stardust.

In the end, this is a film to surrender yourself to, a visual and aural delight. Its surreal landscapes resonate in the viewer's subconscious to create that "wild clime," as Poe wrote in his poem *Dream-Land*, "that lieth, sublime, out of Space—out of Time." ❖

***Terra Brockman** is a freelance writer based in New York.*

• marquis = 侯爵 *kōshaku* • transvestite = 服装倒錯者 *fukusō tōsaku-sha* • sumptuous = 豪華な *gōka na* • lieth = lies = (に)ある *(ni) aru*

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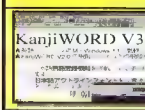

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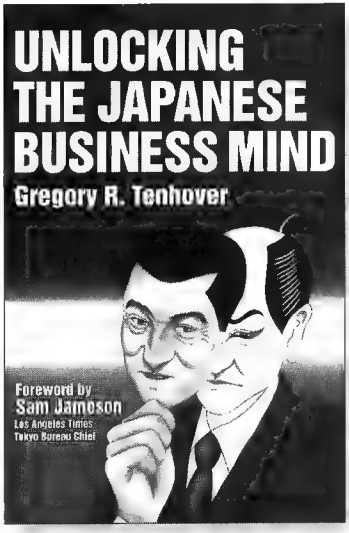

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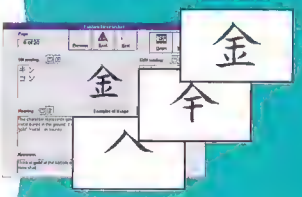

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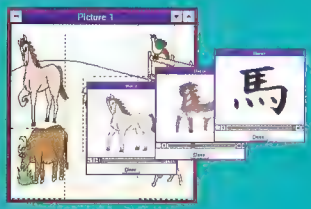

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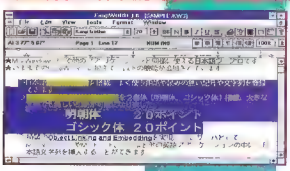

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What in the World is Going on with the Japanese Economy?

by John H. Christy

A Painful Decade

During the 1980s, Japan ascended into the elite circle of industrialized nations, completing its transition from an economy ravished by war to a first-class producer of automobiles, consumer electronics, and semiconductors. Newly rich Japanese companies snapped up pricey works of Western art and foreign real estate trophies such as New York City's Rockefeller Center. Back then it seemed that the sun would never set on the Japanese economy.

Instead, Japan has spent most of the present decade mired in recession with uncertain prospects for recovery. The events of 1995 merely added insult to injury, beginning with the Kobe earthquake and ending with a series of financial scandals that tarnished the reputation of the powerful Ministry of Finance (大蔵省, *Ōkurashō*). Along the way, the yen hit all-time highs against the dollar, hurting profits of export-driven industrial giants.

Japan's current economic woes have deep roots, starting with the collapse of real estate and stock prices in the early '90s. One of the worst victims of all was the banking sector. Stuck holding bad loans and depressed stocks, Japanese banks have been severely strained ever since the bubble burst. With interest rates now at or near all-time lows, banks will have an even harder time getting back on their feet.

Another problem that affects all Japanese companies is the need for restructuring. To compete with leaner foreign rivals, Japanese companies will be forced to cut costs wherever possible—and that almost certainly involves laying off workers. In a country that places heavy emphasis on seniority and lifetime employment, this process is sure to be slow and painful. Some industries, such as telecommunications, may require extensive deregulation.

What Next?

All this gloom and doom prompts one to say, Enough is enough! How much worse can it get? As 1995 proved, no matter how bad things seem, they *can* get worse. Still, economists believe that a fragile recovery is finally underway, with growth resuming this year. According to data gathered by the Economist Intelligence Unit, most analysts expect economic growth in 1996 to be between 1.5 and 2 percent—nothing to write home about, but a vast improvement over previous years. As for the long-term outlook, the jury is still out.

There is good reason to be positive about Japan's prospects. Companies are slowly making the necessary changes to become more competitive; consumer confidence and spending patterns, badly damaged when property values collapsed, have shown signs of renewed health. Finally, the weakening of the yen from about 80 per dollar this past summer to around 105 today should ease pressures on many exporters.

On the other hand, a fair amount of caution is still justified. Government spending helped kickstart the economy, but

The Japanese Stock Market

Japanese stocks can be divided into three main groups: Tokyo Stock Exchange (TSE) First Section, TSE Second Section, and the over-the-counter market, encompassing a total of 2,406 companies. The First Section is by far the largest, home to 1,253 companies and heavily weighted in the banking, electronics, chemicals, and construction sectors. There is also a foreign section that trades stocks of large American and European companies. Regional exchanges round out the Japanese securities market and are located in Osaka, Nagoya, Kyoto, Hiroshima, Fukuoka, Niigata, and Sapporo.

As in America, large securities firms dominate stock market trading. The "Big Four" firms—Nomura, Daiwa, Nikkō, and Yamaichi—are the most influential. Banks and insurance companies are also large buyers of stocks. Many of these firms, as well as the Tokyo exchange itself, are located in Kabutochō, Japan's version of Wall Street, in the Nihonbashi section of Tokyo.

Numerous American and European brokerages have offices in Tokyo, but the high cost of maintaining offices there (including large pay packages for senior-level expatriates), coupled with a sagging stock market, has forced many foreign firms to either cut back or close up shop.

at the expense of the fiscal deficit's creeping higher. Analysts are concerned that Japan may be forced to rein in spending, shortening the life span of the recovery.

Fujita Tsutomu, a portfolio manager at Yamaichi Capital Management, worries that Japan is no longer a leader in key industries of the future. He notes that Japan earned its wings by becoming a dominant player in autos and electronics, but those industries have matured. The country now lacks solid footing in growing industries like software, information technology, and communications.

Perhaps the most troublesome issue is the lack of leadership from the government. While the Ministry of Finance has long played a key role in shaping Japanese economic policy, its ability to do so in the future is questionable. The recent *jusen* fiasco, along with implication in other scandals like Daiwa Bank's concealment of bond trading losses in the US, is more characteristic of a ministry that has lost control than of one that helped make Japan a modern economic powerhouse.

As for the long-term outlook, the jury is still out

Is It Worth Investing?

As for the stock market, The Nikkei 225—an index of large-company stocks often used as a benchmark for the Japanese market—is down 48 percent from its December 1989 peak. It's tempting to wonder if the market has bottomed out and if it may be a good time to buy Japanese stocks.

Since the direction of economies and stock markets is notoriously difficult to predict, it may be more useful to ask which sectors stand to benefit the most from recovery. Some of the most promising Japanese stocks can be found in the over-the-counter market and on the Second Section of the Tokyo Stock Exchange (see box for more detail on the stucture of the stock market). These smaller companies are often more entrepreneurial and innovative than established Japanese companies. What's more, they're usually involved in niche businesses that still have plenty of growth potential even if the overall economy stagnates. One example is Square Co., a Tokyo-based maker of video game software, including Final Fantasy VI and Chrono Trigger. Despite the bleak economic environment, Square Co. has managed to post solid growth in revenues and earnings over the past five years.

Foreign investors who are interested in Japanese stocks have a few options to choose from. Many large Japanese companies, such as Sony, Toyota, Hitachi, Canon, and others well known in America, have securities that trade on US exchanges and can be bought and sold just like US stocks. Known as American Depositary Receipts (ADRs), these securities represent shares of foreign stocks held on deposit by American banks abroad. As the price of the foreign stock

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rises, so does the value of the ADR, and vice versa.

Although it's possible to assemble a portfolio of Japanese issues by yourself, most investors are better off sticking with mutual funds and letting a professional portfolio manager pick the stocks. Most international stock funds have holdings in Japan, and several large funds specialize exclusively in Japanese stocks. The Japan Fund and the Fidelity Japan Fund invest in a variety of Japanese stocks, while the Warburg Pincus Japan OTC Fund and the Japan OTC Equity Fund concentrate on small and medium-sized companies.

If you're brave enough to take the plunge, be sure to do your homework first and be prepared to stick it out for the long haul. Japan's economic ills didn't develop overnight, and they may take years to solve. Nevertheless, Japan remains one of the largest and most powerful economies in the world, and its response to recent troubles will be worth watching. ❖

John H. Christy is a writer for Forbes *magazine.*

Economic and Financial Terms

gaikoku kawase	外国為替	foreign exchange
haitōkin	配当金	dividend
kabushiki, kabu	株式、株	stock, share of stock
kabunushi	株主	shareholder
kabushiki nakagai-nin	株式仲買人	stockbroker
kabu-ya	株屋	stockbroker [slightly derogatory]
kokunai sōseisan	国内総生産	Gross Domestic Product
myūchuaru fando	ミューチュアル・ファンド	mutual fund
nedan	値段	price (of a security)
saiken	債券	bond
shōken-gaisha	証券会社	securities firm
tōshi ginkō	投資銀行	investment bank
tōshi bunseki	投資分析	investment analysis
yunyū	輸入	import
yushutsu	輸出	export

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This is the Katsushika-ku Kameari Kōen-mae Police Box

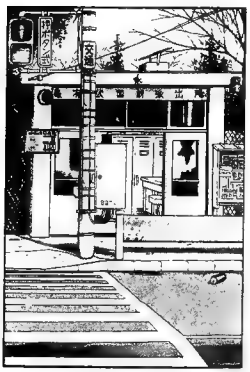
Kochira Katsushika-ku Kameari Kōen-mae Hashutsu-jo

by Akimoto Osamu

秋本治

Akimoto Osamu made his comic strip debut in 1976 with "Kochira Katsushika-ku Kameari Kōen-mae Hashutsu-jo," winning a prize in the annual *Young Jump* competition. The strip was published in the weekly *Shūkan Shōnen Jump* that same year and has been going strong ever since. In fact, "Kochira..." is making records as the longest-running strip in *Shūkan Shōnen Jump*, which itself has the largest circulation of all the manga magazines.

Ryōtsu

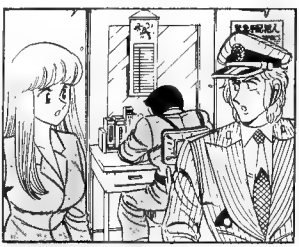


The Kameari Kōen-mae police box

"Kochira..." details the often outrageous experiences of Ryōtsu, a trueborn Edokko (Tokyoite) police officer stationed at a small neighborhood 'police box' in Tokyo. Police boxes—small branch offices of police headquarters—are a common sight throughout Japan's neighborhoods; daily responsibilities of the policemen who staff them usually include no more than giving directions and issuing parking tickets. Incidentally, Kameari Kōen is an actual park in Katsushika-ku, a district in northeastern Tokyo.

The blunt and rough-mannered Ryōtsu is not the sort of officer one might typically find in a police box, but it is his distinctive individuality that makes him so appealing to his fans. He shares his police box with Nakagawa, an earnest junior officer, and Reiko, their secretary.

In the following installment, Ryōtsu and the others make the acquaintance of an unusual young boy who has gotten lost near the police box.



Reiko and Nakagawa

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ハイパー小学生!?の巻
この顔にピンときたら110番
すみませーん!

1

Title: ハイパー　小学生　　の　巻
Haipā　Shōgakusei　no　maki
hyper　primary school student　of　scroll/episode
The Episode of the Hyper Schoolboy
The Hypermedia Kid

- *haipā* is from the English "hyper," but the word is not used to mean "hyperactive" in Japanese. Many English words beginning with "hyper" have been adopted into Japanese, but we conclude from the content that follows that *haipā* is short for "hypermedia" in this case.
- *maki* literally means "scroll," and ～ *no maki* is a term for "episode/chapter" that goes back to when stories were written on scrolls and each scroll would typically contain a single chapter or section. With bound books the term came to mean "fascicle/volume," still often containing only a single chapter, and with the transition to periodicals and TV the term took on the meaning of "episode."

Poster: この　顔　に ピンときたら　110番
Kono kao　ni　pin to kitara　hyakutōban
this　face　(obj.)　if recognize　no. 110
If this face rings a bell, dial 110

Poster: 緊急　　指名手配　犯人
Kinkyū　shimei tehai　hannin
urgent/emergency　wanted　criminal
Most Wanted!

- *pin to kitara* is a conditional ("if/when") form of *pin to kuru* (*kuru* = "come"), a colloquial expression used when something comes clear in one's mind—as in when one gets a joke, recognizes a face, understands an explanation, senses something by intuition, has a hunch, etc. In this case it's very close to the colloquial English expression "rings a bell." *Ni* marks *kono kao* as the object recognized.
- the police can be reached anywhere in Japan by dialing 110; similarly, the fire department can be reached by dialing 119.
- *shimei tehai* essentially means "wanted [as a suspect/criminal]," and *hannin* = "criminal," so *shimei tehai hannin* = "wanted criminal."

Mag. Back: 今日　も　ビール　が　うまいっス!
Kyō　mo　biiru　ga　umai ssu!
today　also　beer　(subj.)　is tasty
Today, too, the beer tastes good.
As always, a great-tasting beer! (PL2-3)

Mag. Front: 競馬誌　　Mr.エド
Keiba-shi　Misutā Edo
horse-racing magazine　Mr. Ed
Horse-Racing Magazine: Mr. Ed

Newspaper: 馬
Uma
The Horses

Boy: すみませーん!
Sumimase–n!
(apology)
"Excuse me!" (PL3)

- *kyō mo* = "today also/too" → "as always/as usual."
- *umai*, when used of foods and beverages, is a mostly masculine, informal word for "delicious/tasty." *Ssu* is a contraction of *desu*, distinctly more casual than *desu* but not as abrupt or informal as the PL2 *da*.
- *-shi* refers to a "magazine/journal/periodical."
- a dubbed version of the American television series "Mr. Ed" ran on Japanese television in the early '60s.
- *sumimasen* can be either an apology or thanks depending on the context; it's often used the way English speakers use "excuse me" when trying to get someone's attention (the last vowel often gets elongated in this use).

まあ！またいねむりしてるわ！
グオオ
1
私のイスを勝手に使わないで！
いて!!
ヨタロー
2
子供が道を聞きにきてるわよ
乱暴な起こし方をしやがって！
3
道に迷ったんですが…
勝手に地図を見ろよ
4
この地図は何年度版ですか？
そんな事知らんよ
5
麗子電話だぞ！
ルルル
6

1 **Reiko**: まあ! また いねむりしてる わ!
Mā! Mata inemuri shiteru wa!
(interj.) again is napping/dozing (fem. colloq.)
"Oh dear! He's sleeping on the job again!" (PL2)

Sound FX: グオオ
Guoo
(sound of snoring)

- *mā* is a feminine interjection of surprise/alarm: "My goodness/Oh dear!"
- *inemuri* refers to "dozing/nodding off" at an inappropriate time, and *inemuri suru* is its verb form (*shiteru* is a contraction of *shite iru*, from *suru*, "do"). The word can also be used to refer to an acceptable "snooze/catnap," but even then the idea is that the sleeping takes place at an unusual time for sleeping.
- *wa* is a mostly feminine particle that gives colloquial emphasis.

2 **Reiko**: 私の イス を 勝手に 使わないで!
Watashi no isu o katte ni tsukawanaide!
my chair (obj.)w/o asking don't use-(request)
"Don't use my chair without asking!" (PL2)

FX: サッ
Sa!
Whisk! (effect of quick, deft movement, here of pulling the chair away)

Sound FX: ゴン
Gon
Bonk (sound of head hitting floor)

Ryōtsu: いて!!
Ite!!
(interj.)
"Ouch!" (PL2)

- *no* between two nouns makes the first into a modifier for the second in a wide variety of ways. When the first noun refers to a person, the *no* is possessive, so *watashi no* ~ = "my ~."
- *katte ni* means "on one's own/without (asking) permission."
- *tsukawanaide* is the *-te* form of *tsukawanai*, negative of *tsukau* ("use"). The *-te* form of a verb can make an informal request or gentle command, and if the verb is negative the request/command is negative—i.e., a prohibition: "don't ~."
- *ite* is one of quite a few colloquial variations on the adjective *itai* ("[something] hurts/is painful"), used as an exclamation of pain.

3 **Reiko**: 子供 が 道 を 聞きにきてる わよ。
Kodomo ga michi o kiki ni kiteru wa yo.
child (subj.) road (obj.) to ask has come(fem. emph.)
"There's a boy here who wants to ask directions." (PL2)

Ryōtsu: 乱暴な 起こし方 を しやがって!
Ranbō na okoshi-kata o shiyagatte!
rough method of waking (obj.) do-(derog.)
"Cripes, you choose a rough way of waking!"
"Cripes, what do you have to wake me up so rough for?" (PL1)

- *kiki* is the stem form of *kiku* ("ask"); *michi o kiku* is literally "ask the road/way" → "ask directions."
- *kiteru* is a contraction of *kite iru* ("has/have come"), from *kuru* ("come"). ~ *ni kuru* means "come in order to [do the action]."
- *wa yo* is a colloquial combination that provides distinctly feminine emphasis.

3 *(continued)*

- *okoshi-* is the stem form of *okosu* ("wake [someone] up"), and *-kata* is a verb suffix meaning "way/method of," so *okoshi-kata* = "way of waking [someone] up."
- *shiyagatte* is the stem of *suru* ("do") with the derogatory/insulting verb ending *-yagaru* in the *-te* form.

4 **Boy**: 道 に 迷った んです が...
Michi ni mayotta n desu ga.
road/way on have become lost (explan.) but
"I've lost my way." (PL3)

Ryōtsu: 勝手に 地図 を 見ろ よ
Katte ni chizu o miro yo.
on own map (obj.) look at (emph.)
"Look at the map yourself." (PL2)

- *mayotta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *mayou* ("become puzzled/at a loss"); *michi ni mayou* is an expression for "lose one's way/become lost."
- *ga* (literally, "but") softens the end of the sentence and implies the speaker wants a response from the listener in this case, help.
- *miro* is the abrupt command form of *miru* ("look at").

5 **Boy**: この 地図 は 何年度版 ですか?
Kono chizu wa nannendo-ban desu ka?
this map as for what year's edition is it?
"What's the date of this map?"
"How old is this map?" (PL3)

Ryōtsu: そんな 事 知らん よ。
Sonna koto shiran yo.
that kind of thing don't know (emph.)
"How should I know?" (PL2)

- ~ *nendo* = "the ~ year," so *nannendo* = "what year."
- *-ban* is a suffix meaning "edition," so *nannendo-ban* = "what year's edition."
- *shiran* is a contraction of *shiranai* ("not know"), negative of *shitte iru* ("know").

6 **Sound FX**: ルルルル
Ru ru ru ru
(sound of cellular phone ringing)

Ryōtsu: 麗子、 電話 だ ぞ!
Reiko, denwa da zo!
(name) telephone call is (emph.)
"Reiko, the phone's ringing!" (PL2)

- *zo* is a rough, masculine particle for emphasis

はい…
あら!?
出ないのか?
1
私の携帯電話みたいですね
ルルル
え!?
2
小学生が携帯電話かよ!
はい! 私です
どうもごぶさたしてます
3
その件については先方と相談して…
はい!
会話が大人びている…
4
少々お待ち下さい!
スケジュールを見てみましょう!
電子手帳を使いこなしている…
ビジネスマンと変らんなこいつ!
5
今度は何を出す気だ?
ズシ…
6
あっ
7

1

Reiko: はい... あら!?
Hai... Ara?
yes/hello (interj.)
"Hello... Hunh?" (PL2)

Ryōtsu: 出ない のか?
Denai no ka?
not come out/answer (explan.-?)
"No answer?" (PL2)

- *hai*, literally "yes," serves as a "hello" when picking up the phone.
- *ara?* (with the intonation of a question) is a feminine interjection of bewilderment/confusion; males would usually say *are?*
- *denai* is the negative form of *deru* ("come/go out"); on the phone, it implies the party at the other end does not answer.

2

Boy: 私の 携帯 電話 みたいです ね。
Watashi no keitai denwa mitai desu ne.
my portable phone seems to be (colloq.)
"It seems to be my cellular phone." (PL2)

Sound FX: ル ル ル
Ru ru ru
(sound of cellular phone ringing)

Ryōtsu: え?!
E?
"What?" (PL2)

- *mitai da/desu* after a noun can mean either "is like ~" or "seems/appears to be ~."

3

Ryōtsu: 小学生 が 携帯 電話 か よ!
Shōgakusei ga keitai denwa ka yo!
grade-schooler (subj.) portable phone (?) (emph.)
"Is a grade-schooler [using] a cell phone?"
"A grade-schooler with a cell phone?" (PL2)

Boy: はい! 私 です。
Hai! Watashi desu.
yes/hello I/me is
"Yes, it's me." (PL3)

Boy: どうも、ごぶさたしてます。
Dōmo, gobusata shitemasu.
(emph.) (hon.)-have been out of touch
"I'm sorry I've been out of touch." (PL3-4)

- *gobusata shitemasu* is a contraction of *gobusata shite imasu*, a greeting used with someone you have been out of touch with for a long time. *Go-* is honorific (it's always required for the greeting), and *busata* literally means "without communication/tidings."

4

Boy: その 件 について は
Sono ken ni tsuite wa
that case/matter regarding as for
先方 と 相談して... はい!
senpō to sōdan shite... Hai!
other party with consult-and yes
"I will consult with the other party regarding that matter... Certainly!" (PL2)

Ryōtsu: 会話 が 大人びている。
Kaiwa ga otonabite iru.
conversation/speech (subj.) adult is like
"He talks like an adult." (PL2)

- *~ ni tsuite* = "as regards ~/in connection with ~."

4 *(continued)*

- *senpō* is one of the most common ways of referring to "the other party" in a business relationship; it's a formal term that most children would not be familiar with.
- *sōdan* = "consultation," and adding *suru* makes it a verb: "consult." *Shite* is the *-te* form of *suru* ("do").
- *-bite iru* is from the relatively rare noun suffix *-biru*, which means "have/show the characteristics of ~": *otonabiru* = "act like an adult."

5

Boy: 少々 お待ち 下さい!
Shōshō o-machi kudasai!
a little/a moment (hon.)-wait please
"Just a moment, please!" (PL4)

スケジュール を 見てみましょう!
Sukejūru o mite mimashō!
schedule (obj.) I'll try looking at
"I'll check my schedule." (PL3)

Sound FX: ピッピピッピッ
Pi! pipi! pi!
Dit didit dit (electronic key tones)

Nakagawa: 電子 手帳 を 使いこなしている。
Denshi techō o tsukai-konashite iru.
electronic notebook (obj.) is using expertly
"He's using that electronic notebook like a pro." (PL2)

Ryōtsu: ビジネスマンと 変わらん な、こいつ!
Bijinesuman to kawaran na, koitsu!
businessman from not different (colloq.) this guy
"He's just like a businessman, this kid!" (PL2)

- *shōshō* is a formal word meaning "a little" and *o-machi kudasai* is a very polite request: "please wait." The honorific *o-* plus the stem form of a verb (*machi* is the stem of *matsu*, "wait") plus *kudasai* makes a PL4 equivalent of the request form *-te kudasai* (PL3).
- *mite* is the *-te* form of *miru* ("look at"), and *mimashō* is the volitional ("let's/I shall") form of the same verb; a form of *miru* after the *-te* form of a verb can imply "[do the action] and see what happens/see what you find."
- *tsukai-konashite iru* is from *tsukai-konasu* ("use fully/expertly"), from *tsukau* ("use") and the verb suffix *-konasu*, which implies doing the action skillfully/completely.
- *kawaran* is a contraction of *kawaranai*; the expression *~ to kawaranai* means "is no different from ~."

6

Sound FX: ズシッ
Zushi!
Thump (effect of setting down heavy backpack)

Ryōtsu: 今度 は 何 を 出す 気 だ?
Kondo wa nani o dasu ki da?
this time/now as for what (obj.) take out intent is
"Now what does he intend to take out?"
"What's he getting out now?" (PL2)

- *nani o dasu* is a complete thought/sentence ("[he] will take out what?") modifying *ki* ("intent").

7

Sound FX: カチャ
Kacha
Click (sound of computer display clicking into open position)

Ryōtsu: あっ!
A!
"Wow!"

- *a!* is an all-purpose exclamation of surprise in response to something observed: "Oh!/Oh no!/Hey!/Wow!," etc.

円がまた下がった！今が売り時ですね
株をやってるのか…
なんだあのランドセルは？
1
あっ～カタカタカタカタ…
2
FAXまで装備しているぞ
すごいランドセルですね！
今資料がきました
3
N・Yのダウも下がっているようです
回復の見とおしはまだつきませんね…
お年玉が入るまでは少しひきしめないと
え！ここの現在地ですか？
4
ここは何という派出所ですかお巡りさん
亀有公園前派出所だ
5
そうです葛飾区亀有――ナビコンで移動してたんですが…
川が埋められたりマンションが建ったりして…地図が古くて迷ってしまったんです
ナビコンもついてるのか…
6

1 **Boy**: 円 が また 下がった!
En ga mata sagatta!
yen (subj.) again went down
"The yen dropped again!" (PL2)

今 が 売り時 です ね。
Ima ga uridoki desu ne.
now (subj.) selling time is (colloq.)
"This is the time to sell." (PL3)

Nakagawa: 株 を やってる のか...
Kabu o yatteru no ka...
stocks (obj.) is doing (explan.-?)
"He invests in stocks . . ." (PL2)

Ryōtsu: なん だ、あの ランドセル は?
Nan da, ano randoseru wa?
what is that backpack as for
"What *is* that backpack?" (PL2)

- *uri* is the stem form of *uru* ("sell"), and *-doki* is from *toki* ("time"; the *t* changes to *d* for euphony); the combination means "the right/best time to sell."
- *~ no ka* (literally, "Is it that ~?") here would be spoken with falling intonation, not as a question; the form is often used when the speaker suddenly comprehends something.
- *randoseru*, from the Dutch *ransel*, refers to the sturdy leather backpacks Japanese grade-schoolers customarily use to carry their books to and from school. In size and appearance they look very much like the backpack pictured in this story—minus the gadgetry, of course.

2 **Ryōtsu**: あっ!
A!
"Hey!"

Sound FX: カタカタカタカタ
Kata kata kata kata
Tucka tucka tucka tucka (sound of fax emerging from machine)

3 **Ryōtsu**: ファックス まで 装備している ぞ。
Fakkusu made sōbi shite iru zo!
fax even is equipped with (emph.)
"It's even got a fax machine!" (PL2)

Nakagawa: すごい ランドセル です ね!
Sugoi randoseru desu ne!
extraordinary/amazing backpack is (colloq.)
"That's one amazing backpack!" (PL2)

Boy: 今、 資料 が きました。
Ima, shiryō ga kimashita.
now data/info (subj.) came
"The data just came in." (PL2)

Sound FX: ビリビリ
Biri biri
Rrrip (sound of tearing off fax)

- *shiryō* can refer to any kind of informational materials, from historical documents to publicity brochures to economic/business statistics, etc.

4 **Boy**: ニューヨーク の ダウ も
Nyuyōku no Dau mo
New York of Dow also
下がっている ようです。
sagatte iru yō desu.
has gone done/is down it seems
"It seems the Dow in New York is down, too." (PL2)

4 *(continued)*
回復 の見とおし は まだ つきません ね。
Kaifuku no mitōshi wa mada tsukimasen ne.
recovery of outlook as for yet not be determined (colq)
"The outlook for recovery cannot yet be determined."
"The outlook for recovery remains unclear." (PL3)

Boy: お年玉 が 入る まで は
Otoshidama ga hairu made wa
NY's gift money (subj.) comes in until as for
少し ひきしめないと。
sukoshi hikishimenai to.
a little must tighten
"I'll have to hold back a bit until I get my *otoshidama*." (PL2)

Boy: え! ここ の 現在地 です か?
E! Koko no genzaichi desu ka?
huh?/what? here of present location is (?)
"What? My present location?" (PL3)

- *mitoshi* = "outlook/forecast," and *mitōshi ga tsuku* means "can determine the outlook/forecast." *Tsukimasen* is the PL3 negative form of *tsuku*
- *otoshidama* refers to gifts of money that children receive from parents and relatives at New Year's.

5 **Boy**: ここ は 何 と いう 派出所 です か、
Koko wa nan to iu hashutsujo desu ka,
here as for what (quote) called police box is (?)
お巡りさん?
omawari-san?
policeman
"Officer, what's this police box called?" (PL3)

Ryōtsu: 亀有公園前 派出所 だ。
Kameari Kōen-mae Hashutsujo da.
(park name)-front police box is
"The Kameari Kōen-mae Police Box." (PL2)

- *hashutsujo* = "branch office," here referring to the small "police boxes" (better known as *kōban* [交番]) dotting the Japanese urban landscape.
- *mae* means "in front of," so *Kameari Kōen-mae* = in front of Kameari Park.

6 **Boy**: そう です。 葛飾区 亀有、
Sō desu. Katsushika-ku Kameari.
that way is (place) (place)
"That's correct. Kameari in Katsushika Ward." (PL3)

ナビコン で 移動してた んです が、
Nabikon de idō shiteta n desu ga,
nav. computer using was moving (explan.) but
"I was making my way about using the navigation computer, but

川 が 埋められたり
kawa ga umeraretari
river (subj.) has been buried-and
マンション が 建ったりして
manshon ga tattari shite
luxury apt (subj.) has been constructed-and
"rivers have been filled in, apartments have gone up, and

地図 が 古くて 迷ってしまった んです。
chizu ga furukute mayotte shimatta n desu.
map (subj.) old-(cause) became lost-(regret) (expl)
"the map is old, so I lost my way." (PL2)

(continued on next page)

あっ！
電池残量
E F
PM 12:40
1
15分ほど充電させていただいていいですか？
かまわんよ！
2
バッテリー充電してから帰りますので5時には帰ります
はい父さん
父親との会話だったのか？親子とは思えん
3
スーパー電子工機のご子息だって!?
そうです
4
「スーパー電子ランドセル」のモニターをやってるんです市販のため！
どおりでメカにくわしいわけだ！
5
最高級システムランドセルとして来年売る予定なんです
けっこう売れたりして
6

6 *(continued from previous page)*

Ryōtsu: ナビコン も ついてる のか...
Nabikon mo tsuiteru no ka...
nav computer also is attached (explan.-?)
"It even has a navigation computer..." (PL2)

- *umerareteri* is from *umerareru* ("be buried/filled in"), passive form of *umeru* ("bury/fill in"), and *tattari* is from *tatsu* ("be built"). The *-tari* form of a verb followed immediately or later in the sentence by *suru* (*shite* is the *-te* form of *suru*) means that the action occurs along with or in addition to others. The others may be listed in a series of several *-tari* verbs, or they may remain unspecified.

1

Boy: あっ!
A!
"Oh no!" (PL2)

Indicator: 電池 残量
Denchi zanryō
battery remaining amount
Battery Gauge

2

Boy: 15分 ほど
Jūgofun hodo
15 min. about
充電させていただいて いい ですか?
juden sasete itadaite ii desu ka?
be permitted to recharge battery all right is it?
"Would it be all right if I recharged my battery for about 15 minutes?" (PL3)

Ryōtsu: かまわん よ。
Kamawan yo.
not mind (emph.)
"Sure, go ahead." (PL2)

- *jūden* is a noun for "battery (re)charging," and adding *suru* makes it a verb. *Sasete* is the *-te* form of *saseru*, the causative ("make/let") form of *suru*, and *itadaite* is the *-te* form of *itadaku* ("receive"). A causative *-te* form plus *itadaku* is often a roundabout and polite "I will [do the action]," but *-te ii desu ka* is a polite way of asking for permission, so in this case it becomes a polite "may I/would it be all right if I [do the action]?"
- *kamawan* is a contraction of *kamawanai*, the negative of *kamau* ("mind/care about") → "don't mind/don't care." *Kamawanai* is often used to grant permission: "that'll be fine/go right ahead."

3

Boy: バッテリー 充電してから
Batterii jūden shite kara
battery after recharging
帰ります ので、 5時 には 帰ります。
kaerimasu node, goji ni wa kaerimasu.
will go home because/so 5:00 by will be home
"I'll go home after I recharge my battery, so I'll be there by 5:00." (PL3)

Boy: はい、父さん。
Hai, Tōsan.
yes father
"Yes, Father." (PL3)

Ryōtsu: 父親 との 会話 だった のか?
Chichi-oya to no kaiwa datta no ka?
father with of conversation was (explan.-?)
"So he was talking with his father?" (PL2)
親子 と は 思えん。
Oyako to wa omoen.
parent and child (quote) as for can't think/believe

3 *(continued)*

"It's hard to believe they're father and son."
"It hardly sounded like a conversation between father and son." (PL2)

- *omoen* is a contraction of *omoenai*, negative of *omou* ("think/believe").

4

Nakagawa: スーパー電子工機の ご子息 だ って?!
Supa Denshi Kōki no go-shisoku da tte?!
(co. name) of (hon.)-son is/are (quote)
"You say you're the son of Super Electronics Co.?"
"Your father owns Super Electronics?!" (PL2)

Boy: そう です。
Sō desu.
that way is
"That's right." (PL2)

- *go-shisoku* is a very polite word for son.
- ~ *da tte* is a colloquial quotative form that expresses the speaker's surprise at what he has just heard.

5

Boy: 「スーパー 電子 ランドセル」の
"Sūpā Denshi Randoseru" no
super electronic backpack of/for
モニター を やってる んです。
monitā o yatteru n desu.
monitor/trial user (obj.) am doing (explan.)
"I'm trying out the 'Super Electronic Backpack.'" (PL3)
市販 のため。
Shihan no tame.
market/sell for purpose of
"For market research."

Ryōtsu: どおりで メカ にくわしい わけ だ!
Dōri de meka ni kuwashii wake da!
no wonder machines in well-versed situation is
"No wonder he can handle all those high-tech gadgets." (PL2)

- *monitā* is a katakana rendering of "monitor"; one of the meanings of *monitā* in Japanese is "product tester/trial user."
- *yatteru* is a contraction of *yatte iru* ("am/is/are doing"), from *yaru*, an informal word for "do." *Monitā o yatte iru* = "am doing/acting as a product tester" → "am trying [it] out."
- *shihan* is a noun for "selling in the open market," so *shihan no tame* means "for the purpose of selling it in the open market"—i.e., it's in preparation for the product launch.
- *meka*, short for *mekanizumu* (from the English "mechanism"), refers to all types of machinery in Japanese.

6

Boy: 最高級 システム ランドセル として
Saikokyu shisutemu randoseru to shite
highest-class system backpack as
来年 売る 予定 なんです。
rainen uru yotei na n desu.
next year sell schedule (is-explan.)
"It's scheduled to go on sale next year as a high-end integrated system backpack." (PL2)

Ryōtsu: けっこう 売れたり して。
Kekkō uretari shite.
considerably sells actually happen
"Watch it actually sell." (PL2)

- *uretari* is from *ureru*, "[something] sells"—usually implying "sells well."

12時45分
塾ノ時間デス
しまった塾に間に合わない！
ピピー
1
あっ先生すみません
ちょっと道に迷い遅れてしまって…
テストはできているので送ります
2
国語と算数の2枚です
採点してすぐ送り返す…
はい！
待機してます！
まるで通信教育だな
カタカタ
3
ソロバンかあ！
メカだらけの中こういうのはホッとするな！
ちょっとそれ…
4
ジャックがついてますよ
えっ!?
5
それはソロバンじゃありませんよ！
そんなバカな！
6
ソロバンとしても使えますが…
モニターにつないで
7

1 **Sound FX**: ピーピー
Pii pii
Beep beep (sound of electronic alarm)

Backpack: 12時45分、 塾 ノ 時間 デス。
Jūniji yonjūgofun, juku no jikan desu.
12:45 cram school for time is
"It's 12:45, time for *juku* class." (PL2)

Boy: しまった! 塾 に 間に合わない!
Shimatta! Juku ni maniawanai!
(exclam.) *juku* to won't be in time
"Darn! I'm late for *juku*." (PL2)

- *juku* refers to a wide variety of after-school and Saturday academies that Japanese schoolchildren attend to supplement their studies—in the case of the better students, to "cram" for high school and college entrance exams; in the case of weaker students, to help them keep up at school.
- *shimatta* is an exclamation of regret or chagrin: "Oops!/Oh no!/Shoot!"
- *maniawanai* is the negative form of *maniau* ("be on time").

2 **Boy**: あっ、 先生、すみません
A!, sensei, sumimasen.
(interj.) teacher (apology)
"Ahh, teacher, I'm sorry." (PL3)

Boy: ちょっと 道 に 迷い、遅れてしまって...
Chotto michi ni mayoi, okurete shimatte...
a little road on got lost became late-(regret)
"I got a bit lost, and I'm running late." (PL3)

Boy: テスト は できている ので 送ります。
Tesuto wa dekite iru node okurimasu.
test as for is finished because/so will send/fax
"I finished my tests so I'll fax them to you." (PL3)

- *mayoi* is the stem form of *mayou*, here being used as a continuing form: "got lost, and ..."
- *okurete* is the *-te* form of *okureru* ("become late"), and *shimatte* is the *-te* form of *shimau*, which after the *-te* form of a verb implies the action was undesirable/regrettable.
- *dekite iru* ("is finished/completed") is from *dekiru*, which means "reach completion" when speaking of a project/assignment/undertaking.

3 **Boy**: 国語 と 算数 の 2枚 です。
Kokugo to sansū no nimai desu.
Japanese and math (=) 2 sheets is
"There'll be 2 pages, Japanese and math." (PL3)

Boy: 採点して すぐ 送り返す...
Saiten shite sugu okurikaesu...
will score-and immediately send back
"You'll grade them and send them right back..." (PL2)

はい! 待機してます!
Hai, taiki shitemasu.
yes/all right will be standing by
"All right, I'll stand by." (PL3)

Sound FX: カタタ...カタタン
Katata... katatan
Tuckatuck tuckatucka (sound of papers being pulled into machine)

Ryōtsu: まるで 通信 教育 だ な。
Marude tsūshin kyōiku da na.
just like correspondence course is (colloq.)
"It's just like a correspondence course." (PL2)

3 *(continued)*

- *kokugo*, literally "national language," is the Japanese counterpart of what has traditionally been called "English" or "language arts" in American schools.

4 **Ryōtsu**: ソロバンかあ! メカだらけ の中、
Soroban kā! Meka-darake no naka,
abacus (excl.) all hi-tech gadgetry amongst/within
こういう の は ホッとする な!
kō iu no wa ho-tto suru na!
this kind of one as for is relief (colloq.)
"Ahh, an abacus! It's a relief to see something like this amongst all the high-tech gadgetry." (PL2)

Sound FX: カチャカチャカチャ
Kacha kacha kacha
(rattling of abacus beads)

Nakagawa: ちょっと、それ...
Chotto, sore...
a little that
"Just a second. That thing..."

- the question indicated by *ka* here is purely rhetorical, and elongating the vowel makes it an exclamation.
- *-darake* is a suffix meaning "covered with/full of ~," so *meka-darake* = "full of high-tech gadgetry."
- *ho!* represents a sigh of relief, so *ho-tto suru* is literally "do/breathe a sigh of relief," but the expression typically means "[something] is a relief/brings relief."
- the abacus is still occasionally used for calculating in Japan.

5 **Nakagawa**: ジャック が ついてます よ。
Jakku ga tsuitemasu yo.
jack (subj.) is attached (emph.)
"... it has an output jack." (PL3)

Ryōtsu: えっ?!
E!?
"What?!" (PL2)

6 **Boy**: それ は ソロバン じゃありません よ!
Sore wa soroban ja arimasen yo.
that as for abacus is not (emph.)
"That's not an abacus." (PL3)

Ryōtsu: そんな バカな!
Sonna baka na!
that kind of idiotic/foolish
"You're kidding!" (PL2)

- *baka na* = "idiotic/foolish/crazy," and *sonna baka na* is an exclamation like "That's crazy/impossible/can't be!" > "You're kidding!"

7 **Boy**: ソロバン として も 使えます が...
Soroban to shite mo tsukaemasu ga,
abacus as also can use but
"You can also use it as an abacus, but..."

Sound FX: カチャ
Kacha
Click (sound of attaching cable)

Boy: モニター に つないで...
Monitā ni tsunaide...
monitor to connect-and
[see next frame]

- *tsukaemasu* is the PL3 form of *tsukaeru* ("can use"), from *tsukau* ("use").

キーボードとして使うのが正しいのです
なるほど…
1
父は最新メカでもあたたかみのあるデザインが好きなんです
よく見るとひとつひとつの玉にキーボードの文字が入ってる…うーむ
2
このたて笛も最新メカなんです
なに!!
3
どこから見ても普通の笛だ
しかけがあるとは思えない
音声モードにすると…
4
電話が音でかけられるんです…
あっ
5
天気予報です…
ニュースの時間か
音のリモコンで電話番号からテレビのチャンネルまで…
まるでヘビ使いだ
6

1

Boy: キーボード として 使う の が
Kiibōdo to shite tsukau no ga
keyboard as use (nom.) (subj.)
正しい のです。
tadashii no desu.
is correct (explan.)
"... it's meant to be hooked up to a monitor and used as a keyboard." (PL3)

Sound FX: パチ パチ パチ
Pachi pachi pachi
Click click click (flicking abacus beads)

Ryōtsu: なるほど...
Naruhodo...
"I see..." (PL2)

- *no* makes the complete thought/sentence *monitā ni tsunaide kiibōdo to shite tsukau* ("[you] hook [it] up to a monitor and use [it] as a keyboard") act as a single noun, and *ga* marks this as the subject of *tadashii* ("is correct").
- *naruhodo* expresses one's understanding of, or interest in, what one has heard/observed/experienced: "aha/I see/indeed/interesting."

2

Boy: 父 は 最新 メカ でも あたたかみ
Chichi wa saishin meka demo atatakami
father as for newest gadgetry even if is warmth
の ある デザイン が 好き なんです。
no aru dezain ga suki na n desu.
(subj.) have designs (subj.) likes (explan.)
"Even for high-tech gadgets, my father likes designs that have a certain warmth." (PL2)

Ryōtsu: よく 見ると ひとつひとつの 玉 に
Yoku miru to hitotsu hitotsu no tama ni
well/closely if look each bead on
キーボード の 文字 が 入ってる。うーむ。
kiibōdo no moji ga haitteru. Ūmu.
keyboard of letters (subj.) is inscribed (interj.)
"If you look closely, you can see a keyboard letter inscribed on each bead. Hmm." (PL2)

- *atatakami* is a noun form of the adjective *atatakai* ("warm"). *Atatakami no aru* is a complete thought/sentence ("[it] has warmth") modifying *dezain* (from the English "design").
- *yoku* is the adverb form of the adjective *ii/yoi* ("good/fine"). *Yoku miru* = "look well/carefully/closely." *To* after a non-past verb can give a conditional "if/when" meaning.
- *haitteru* is a contraction of *haitte iru* ("is in," here meaning "is inscribed").

3

Boy: この たて笛 も 最新 メカ なんです。
Kono tatebue mo saishin meka na n desu.
this recorder also newest gadgetry (explan.-is)
"This recorder also uses the newest technology." (PL2)

Ryōtsu: なに!!
Nani?!
"What?!" (PL2)

4

Ryōtsu: どこ から 見ても 普通の 笛 だ。
Doko kara mite mo futsū no fue da.
where from even if look ordinary recorder is
"No matter how you look at it, it looks like an ordinary flute." (PL2)

Nakagawa: しかけ が ある と は 思えない。
Shikake ga aru to wa omoenai.
hidden mech. (subj) has (quote) as for can't think
"It sure doesn't look like there are any hidden mechanisms." (PL2)

4 *(continued)*

Boy: 音声 モード にすると...
Onsei mōdo ni suru to...
sound mode if make it/switch to
"If you switch it to sound mode..."

Sound FX: ピッ
Pi!
Dit! (tone from button pushed)

- *mite mo* is from *miru* ("look at"); a question word plus a verb ending in *-te mo* makes an expression for "no matter who/what/where," so *doko kara mite mo* is literally "no matter from where one looks at [it]."
- *~ ni suru* here means "make it ~," in the sense of making a switch ▸"switch it to ~."
- *shikake* = "mechanism/device/contrivance" often a hidden one.

5

Boy: 電話 が 音 で かけられる んです。
Denwa ga oto de kakerareru n desu.
telephone call (subj.) sound using can make (expl)
"you can dial the phone by sound." (PL3)

Sound FX: ピーポーポー
Pii pō pō
(notes from flute)

Sound FX: ピピピ
Pi pi pi
(tones for dialing produced by computer in response to flute)

Ryōtsu: あっ!
A!
"Wow!"

- *kakerareru* is the potential ("can/be able to") form of *kakeru*, which when speaking of telephones means "call/make a call" → "can dial the phone."

6

TV: 天気 予報 です...
Tenki yohō desu...
weather forecast is
"Now the weather forecast..."
ニュース の 時間 が..
Nyūsu no jikan ga...
news of time (subj.)
"The time for news..." (PL3)

Boy: 音 の リモコン で 電話番号 から
Oto no rimokon de denwa bangō kara
sound of remote control using phone numbers from
テレビ の チャンネル まで...
terebi no channeru made.
TV of channels to/as far as
"Using the sound-based remote control, [you can input anything] from telephone numbers to TV channels."
"You can use the sound of the flute as a remote control for dialing phone numbers or changing TV channels." (PL2)

Sound FX: ピーポー ピッピッピッ
Pii pō Pi! pi! pi!
(flute) (channel-switching sounds)

Ryōtsu: まるで ヘビ使い だ
Marude hebitsukai da.
just like snake charmer is
"He's like a snake charmer." (PL2)

このコンパスや分度器も
1
カメラの三脚になったり…
分度器はデータ用のCDにもなります
2
すごい機能がギッシリだこのランドセル！
生徒全員がつけていたらすごいですね
もしもし
はいはい
チェックイット
3
もっと重要な機能もあるんですよ
え？
4
緊急の時は！
ここを引くと…
5
タスケテ下サイ！
あ!?
誘拐犯もこれで逃げます！
6
20秒後に信号弾が3発上がります
すごいシステムだ…
7

1 **Boy**: この コンパス や 分度器 も . . .
Kono konpasu ya bundoki mo . . .
this compass and protractor also
"This compass and protractor . . .

2 **Boy**: カメラ の 三脚 に なったり . . .
kamera no sankyaku ni nattari . . .
camera for tripod into becomes-and
"turns into a tripod for a camera, and . . .

Boy: 分度器 は データ用 の
bundoki wa dēta-yō no
protractor as for data-(purpose) for
シーディー に も なります。
shii-dii ni mo narimasu.
CD to also becomes
"the protractor becomes a CD-ROM." (PL2)

- *nattari* is the *-tari* form of *naru* ("become"); *narimasu* is the PL3 form of the same verb.
- the suffix *-yō* means "for/for the purpose of"; *dēta-yō* = "for the purpose of data."

3 **Ryōtsu**: すごい 機能 が ギッシリ だ、
Sugoi kinō ga gisshiri da,
amazing functions (subj.) chock-full is
この ランドセル!
kono randoseru!
this backpack
"This backpack is chock-full of all kinds of amazing features!" (PL2)

Nakagawa: 生徒 全員 が つけていたら すごい です ね。
Seito zen'in ga tsukete itara sugoi desu ne.
students all (subj.) if wore amazing is (colloq.)
"If all the students wore one of these, it'd really be incredible." (PL3)

Children: もしもし。 / はいはい。
Moshi-moshi. / Hai hai.
hello / hello/yes
"Hello." / "Yes." (PL3)

Child: チェックメイト、 どうぞ。
Chekkumeito, dōzo.
checkmate over
"Checkmate. Over." (PL2)

- *gisshiri* describes something that is "packed tightly/crammed to capacity" → "chock-full."
- *wa*, to mark *kono randoseru* as the topic, has been omitted. The syntax is inverted; normal order would be *kono randoseru wa sugoi kinō ga gisshiri da.*
- *seito* is most commonly used to refer to students through high school; the word can also refer to students in private classes of various kinds. College students are called *gakusei* (学生).
- *zen* = "all," and *in* = "member(s)," so *zen'in* = "all members," and *seito zen'in* = "all the students."
- *tsukete itara* is a conditional "if" form of *tsukete iru* ("is/are wearing"), from *tsukeru* ("attach" or "wear").
- *moshi-moshi* is the standard way for the person initiating a phone call to say "hello." The person answering says *hai.*
- *dōzo* is a polite word for urging the listener to do something: "please [do the action]." When communicating over walkie-talkies and other radio equipment, it's used like "over" in English to signal that the other person may now speak. The boy is apparently following that custom even though it's not necessary on a cell phone.

4 **Boy**: もっと 重要な 機能 も あるんです よ。
Motto jūyō na kinō mo aru n desu yo.
more important functions also has (explan.)(emph.)
"It has even more important features as well." (PL3)

Ryōtsu: え?
E?
"What?" (PL2)

- *kinō* = "function(s)/functionality" → "features."

5 **Boy**: 緊急 の 時 は / ここ を 引くと . . .
Kinkyū no toki wa / koko o hiku to . . .
emergency of time as for this place (obj.) if pull
"In an emergency, if you pull this . . ."

FX: グイ
Gui
(effect of pulling)

6 **Backpack**: タスケテ 下サイ!
Tasukete kudasai!
help please
"Please help!" (PL3)

Sound FX: ウ～ウ～ウ～
U– U– U–
(sound of alarm)

Ryōtsu. あ!
A!
"Yow!"

Boy: 誘拐犯 も これ で 逃げます!
Yūkai-han mo kore de nigemasu!
kidnappers too/also this with will flee
"With this, kidnappers, too, will run away."
"It'll scare away any would-be kidnappers!" (PL3)

- *tasukete* is the *-te* form of *tasukeru* ("save/rescue"), and *kudasai* after the *-te* form of a verb makes a relatively polite request. People calling for help often dispense with the politeness and simply cry *tasuketē* (female) or *tasukete kurē* (male).
- *yūkai* = "kidnapping," and *-han* written with this kanji means "criminal," so *yūkai-han* = "kidnapper."
- *nigemasu* is the PL3 form of *nigeru* ("run away/flee")

7 **Boy**: 20秒後 に 信号弾 が
Nijūbyō-go ni shingō-dan ga
20 secs. later at signal projectile (subj.)
3発 上がります。
sanpatsu agarimasu.
3-(count) will go up/be launched
"20 seconds later, 3 signal flares shoot up." (PL3)

Ryōtsu: すごい システム だ . . .
Sugoi shisutemu da . . .
extraordinary system is
"What an incredible system . . ." (PL2)

- *byō* = "seconds," and *-go* after a time span means "[that much time] later," so *nijūbyō-go* = "20 seconds later."
- 発 (read *hatsu* or *patsu* depending on the number it follows) is a counter suffix for "shots," most typically shots involving explosions, such as of guns, rockets, and fireworks, but also of such things as pachinko balls or the "shot" of a ball off of a baseball bat.
- *agarimasu* is the PL3 form of *agaru* ("go up," or in the case of rockets, flares, and other high-flying projectiles, "be launched/shoot up").

正面についてるのは何だ！
これはエアバッグです！
1
前後に3個ついていて衝撃で開きます
手動で浮き袋にもなります
2
首の所に体温や脈を測定する機能があり
3
脈拍や熱をはかり健康管理もするわけです
すべて健康のようですね
何から何までついてるな……
4
大都会を生きぬくにはこのくらいしないと！
ランドセルひとつで世界中まわれるぞ
5
大人向けのもあります！
なに！
大人がランドセル背負うと不気味だぞ
ランドセルとは形がちがいます
7

1 **Ryōtsu**: 正面 に ついてる の は 何 だ!
Shōmen ni tsuiteru no wa nan da?
front on are attached (nom.) as for what is/are
"What are those things on the front?" (PL2)

Boy: これ は エアバッグ です。
Kore wa eabaggu desu.
these as for airbags are
"These are airbags." (PL3)

- *no* makes the complete thought/sentence *shōmen ni tsuiteru* ("[they] are attached to the front") act as a single noun, and *wa* makes it the topic: "as for what is/are attached to the front, . . ."

2 **Boy**: 前後 に 3個 ついていて
Zengo ni sanko tsuite ite
front & back in/on 3-(count) are attached-and
衝撃 で 開きます。
shōgeki de hirakimasu.
shock/impact by means of will open
"On front and back, three bags are attached, and they open by means of shock."
"There are 3 of them, front and back, and they open on impact." (PL3)

Boy: 手動 で 浮き袋 に も なります。
Shudō de ukibukuro ni mo narimasu.
hand operation by floating bag to also become
"You can also deploy them manually for use as floating devices." (PL3)

3 **Boy**: 首 の 所 に 体温 や 脈 を
Kubi no tokoro ni taion ya myaku o
neck of place at body temp. and pulse (obj.)
測定する 機能 が あり . . .
sokutei suru kinō ga ari . . .
measure functions (subj.) exist-and
"Around the neck there are sensors to check your temperature and pulse, and . . .

- *tai* means "body," so *taion* refers specifically to "body temperature." Atmospheric temperature is *kion* (気温).
- *taion ya myaku o sokutei suru* is a complete thought/sentence ("[it] measures body temperature and pulse") modifying *kinō* ("function/feature").

4 **Boy**: 脈拍 や 熱 を はかり、
myakuhaku ya netsu o hakari,
pulse and temp (obj.) measure/take-and
健康 管理 も する わけ です。
kenkō kanri mo suru wake desu.
health management/monitoring also does sit. is
"by keeping track of these, it monitors your health." (PL3)

Sound FX: ピッピッ
Pi! pi!
Dit dit (electronic beeps)

Boy: すべて 健康 のようです ね。
Subete kenko no yō desu ne
all is healthy/healthful seems that (colloq.)
"I appear to be completely healthy." (PL3)

Ryōtsu: 何 から 何 まで ついてる な。
Nani kara nani made tsuteru na
what from what to is/are attached (colloq.)
"It's got anything and everything, doesn't it." (PL2)

- *hakari* is the stem form of the verb *hakaru* ("measure/gauge"), here functioning as a continuing form.
- ～*wake desu* is literally "it's the situation that ～," but such explanatory forms are used much more in Japanese than in English.

4 *(continued)*

- ～ *no yō desu* = "seems/appears to be ～."
- *nani kara nani made* (lit., "from what to what") is an idiomatic expression like "from A to Z/anything and everything."

5 **Boy**: 大都会 を 生きぬく には
Dai-tokai o ikinuku ni wa
large city (obj.) survive in order to
"In order to survive the big city
この くらい しないと。
kono kurai shinai to
this approx. amt. if doesn't do
"one must do at least this much."
"It's really just the bare minimum you need to survive in the big city." (PL2)

FX: キッ
Ki! (effect of sharp look)

Ryōtsu: ランドセル ひとつ で 世界中 まわれる ぞ。
Randoseru hitotsu de sekai-jū mawareru zo.
backpack 1 item with entire world can tour (emph)
"He could go around the world with nothing but that backpack." (PL2)

- *iki-* is the stem form of *ikiru* ("live"), and *-nuku* is a verb suffix meaning "[continue the action] through to the end" → "live through/live out" → "survive."
- *kurai* (or *gurai*) after numbers or amounts usually means "approximately/about," but it's also used when speaking of actions to mean "at least [do the action]" or "[do] at least [the indicated amount]."
- *shinai* is the negative of *suru*, and *to* makes a conditional "if/when" meaning; implied here is "if one doesn't do at least this much, it's no good" → "one must do at least this much."
- *mawareru* is the potential ("can/be able to") form of *mawaru* ("go around").

6 **Boy**: 大人向け の も あります。
Otona-muke no mo arimasu.
adult-targeted ones also exist
"We also make a version for grown-ups." (PL3)

Ryōtsu: なに?!
Nani?!
"What?" (PL2)

- ～*muke no* (lit., "one directed/targeted at ～") essentially means "designed especially for ～."

7 **Ryōtsu**: 大人 が ランドセル 背負うと 不気味 だ ぞ。
Otona ga randoseru seou to bukimi da zo.
adult (subj.) backpack if wear weird is (emph.)
"It'd be awfully weird for a grown-up to wear one of those." (PL2)

Boy: ランドセル と は 形 が ちがいます。
Randoseru to wa katachi ga chigaimasu.
backpack from as for shape (subj.) is different
"It's not in the shape of a backpack." (PL3)

- *seou* is literally "bear on one's back" → "wear."

To be continued . . .

"ADD TWO EGGS AND STIR."
RIGHT.
THE RECIPE SAYS IT MAKES TWENTY PANCAKES, SO WE'LL EACH GET TEN.
NAH, THAT'S TOO MUCH TROUBLE.
WE'LL JUST MAKE ONE BIG PANCAKE AND CUT IT IN HALF
1
2
3
4

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1

Hobbes: "'Add two eggs and stir.'"
「卵　を　2個　加えて　かき混ぜる。」
"Tamago o niko kuwaete, kakimazeru."
egg (obj.) two count add-and stir together

Calvin: "Right."
オーケー。
Ōkē.
OK

2

Hobbes: "The recipe says it makes twenty pancakes, so we'll each get ten."
レシピ には これで　20枚 パンケーキ が　できる　って書いてある から、
Reshipi ni wa kore de nijūmai pankeki ga dekiru tte kaite aru kara,
recipe in this with twenty count pancakes (subj.) can be made (quote) is written so
1人　10枚 ずつ だ　ね。
hitori jūmai zutsu da ne.
one person ten count each is (colloq.)

- The recipe says [that] it makes . . . 本や文書が主語の場合、says は「書いてある／～によると」の意味. [that] it から pancakes までは says の目的語となる名詞節。It はかき混ぜてできたパンケーキのたねのこと

3

Calvin: "Nah, that's too much trouble."
いやぁ、そりゃ　めんどくさすぎる　な。
Iyā, sorya mendokusa-sugiru na.
no that-as for is too much trouble (colloq.)

- Nah は no の口語でのバリエーションの一つ。
- that's = that is. that はここでは 20 枚パンケーキを焼くことを指す。

4

Calvin: "We'll just make one **big** pancake and cut it in half."
でかーい パンケーキ を　一つ 作って、半分 に 切れば　いい　よ!
Dekāi pankeki o hitotsu tsukutte, hanbun ni kireba ii yo!
big pancake (obj.) one make-and half into if cut is good/fine (emph.)

- We'll = We will.
- it は one big pancake を指す

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1

Host: "So, doctor, are dogs more intelligent than cats?"
で、 先生、 犬 は 猫 より 知性的 なん でしょうか?
De, sensei, inu wa neko yori chisei-teki na n deshō ka?
(conj.) doctor dog as for cat more than intelligent (explan.) do you think?

- 会話で文頭に用いる So は「ところで」など、単に言葉を切り出すのに使ったり、前の会話を受けて「それで」の意味に使用される。
- doctor 英語では医師、歯科医、獣医のほか博士号を持っている人も Doctor XX の肩書きを用いるが、単に Doctor と呼びかける場合は一般に、医師、歯科医、獣医等を指し、日本語で言う「先生」に相当する。

2

Doctor: "Well, dogs scored very high in testing."
まあ、 犬 は テストで 高い 点 を 出しました ね。
Má, inu wa tesuto de takai ten o dashimashita ne.
(interj.) dog as for test in/on high points (obj.) produced (colloq.)

Host: "...And cats?"
猫 は どうです か?
Neko wa dō desu ka?
cat as for how is (?)

- well「ええと／さて／そうですね」など、会話で言葉を切り出したり、あいまいに言葉を継いだり、間を置いたりする際に用いる

3

Doctor: "Well, they wouldn't take the test."
それ が、 猫 は テストを 受けようとしない んです よ。
Sore ga, neko wa tesuto o ukeyō to shinai n desu yo.
that (subj.) cat as for test (obj.) not try to take (explan.) (emph.)

Garfield: "We have nothing to prove."
俺たち にゃ、証明すべき こたァ何もない から ね。
Ore-tachi nya, shōmei subeki kotā nani mo nai kara ne.
we/us as for should prove thing have nothing because (colloq.)

- wouldn't = would not「しようとしない」など、意志的にしないことを指す。

Lesson 55 • *Erai:* from admirable to terrible

Erai means "admirable" or "worthy of praise/respect," so it makes sense that *erai hito* (偉い人; *hito* = "person") refers to an "important/high-ranking person." But some of the adjective's idiomatic meanings range quite far from "admirable" or "praiseworthy." For example, *erai koto* (えらい事; *koto* = "thing") often means "a serious/terrible/disastrous thing."

Even the meaning "important" turns out to be a double-edged sword when *erai* becomes the adverb *erasō ni*, literally meaning "in a manner that appears *erai*." If a person is described as acting *erasō ni*, it implies he's behaving self-importantly or snobbishly. Even if the person is merely exercising his legitimate authority, as far as the speaker is concerned, he's just being a jerk. *Erasō na*, which is used for modifying nouns, carries the same implications.

As an extension of the "serious/terrible" meaning, *erai* and its adverb form, *eraku*, are also used as intensifiers, like "terribly" or "very" or "mighty."

You may be wondering why we wrote *erai* two different ways in the first paragraph. As a matter of convention, *erai* is written with hiragana when used as an intensifier or to mean "serious/terrible," but it can be written with either hiragana or kanji when it means "admirable."

Admirable (1)

Michiko, a young girl, did the ironing for her entire family. Her friends are impressed that she did so much work without being asked.

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Friend 1: フーン、 洗たく物 全部 一人 で
Fūn, sentaku-mono zenbu hitori de
(interj.) laundry all one person by
アイロンかけた の?
airon kaketa no?
ironed (emph.)
"Wow! You ironed all the laundry by yourself?" (PL2)

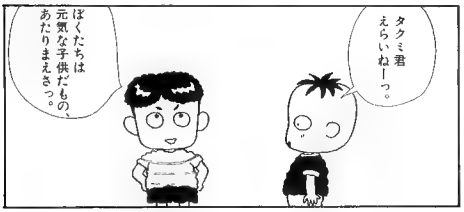
Friend 2: えらい わ ねー。
Erai wa ne.
admirable (fem. emph.) (colloq.)
"That is so admirable."
"You're so go-o-od!" (PL2)

- *sentaku* and *sentaku-mono* both mean "laundry"; *-mono* ("thing/item") is added when referring specifically to the clothes that make up the laundry rather than to the act of doing the laundry.
- *hitori de*, the counter for "one person" plus the particle *de* ("with/by"), means "by oneself."

Erai is often used (mainly by adults) as a word of praise for children who have done something exceptional—especially something not normally expected of them at their age, like cleaning their room without being asked or sharing candy with siblings → "You're such a good kid" or "That's nice of you."

Admirable (2)

Takumi just gave his bus seat to an elderly woman. Kurita is impressed by his thoughtfulness.



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Kurita: タクミ君、 えらい ねーっ
Takumi kun, erai nē!
(name-fam.) admirable (colloq.)
"Takumi, you are admirable."
"That's really nice of you, Takumi." (PL2)

Takumi: ぼくたち は 元気な 子供 だ もの
Boku-tachi wa genki na kodomo da mono.
we as for healthy/strong children are (explan.)
あたりまえ さっ
Atarimae sa!
matter of course (is-emph.)
"We're healthy children, so it's a matter of course."
"We're young and healthy, so it's only natural." (PL2)

- *da mono* at the end of a sentence means "because it is/they are/we are ~." It often carries the nuance that the stated reason is obvious.
- *atarimae* means "a matter of course/common sense."
- *sa* at the end of a sentence in informal speech gives authoritative or self-satisfied emphasis. It usually takes the place of *da/desu* ("is/are"): *atarimae sa* = "is a matter of course" → "it's only natural."

Admirable (3)

Izumi is riding into the heart of Tokyo during rush hour with Fuwa, who makes the commute every day. As the two get increasingly smushed by the boarding passengers, Fuwa asks Izumi if she is OK.

© Hoshisato Mochiru / *Ribingu Gēmu*, Shogakukan

Izumi: へーき。 先輩 なんか、コレ 毎日
Hēki. Senpai nanka, kore mainichi
unconcerned senior/you (emph.) this every day
乗ってる んだもん。 えらい な
notteru n da mon. Erai na
riding (explan.) admirable (colloq.)
"I'm fine. You ride this every day. It is so admirable [that you are able to endure the crowds]."
"I'm fine. I can't believe you put up with these crowds every day." (PL2)

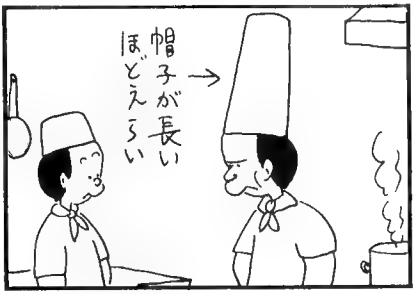
- *hēki* (*heiki*) means "calm/composed/unconcerned" ‣ "not bothered" ‣ "doing fine." Writing it へーき instead of へいき is a "pop" spelling (many manga artists like to use katakana long marks instead of adding the appropriate hiragana for long vowels).
- *senpai* refers to a senior member of a group or a person with more experience than the speaker. When Izumi first met Fuwa, she was a younger employee in the office where he worked. She still addresses him by that title even though they no longer work together.

Important

The following panel is the beginning of a four-frame manga about how a chef's hat can get in the way when it's too tall. The solution eventually proposed is a collapsible hat that can be inflated whenever subordinates are around.

Arrow: 帽子 が 長い ほど、えらい。
Boshi ga nagai hodo, erai.
hat (subj.) is long extent is important
"To the extent the hat is long, [the chef] is important."
The taller the hat, the more important the chef. (PL2)

- A *hodo* B means "to the extent of A, B" or "the more A, the more B."



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High-ranking

Sasaki (not seen here) has been invited to a party by the leaders of two factions at his company, each of whom has a chance of becoming president. Sasaki will be in line for a nice promotion if he goes to the party with the one who will eventually make it, but in the meantime, the anxiety of trying to decide where to place his allegiance has made life miserable for him. Hamasaki notes wryly that such is life when you're playing in the big league.

© Yamasaki & Kitami / *Tsuri Baka Nisshi*, Shogakukan

Hamasaki: 偉く なったら おしまい ス!!
Eraku nattara, oshimai su!!
important if become the end is
"If you become important, that's the end."
"Once you're among the elite, you can kiss your peaceful life goodbye!" (PL2)

Coworker: ブッ。
Pu!
(sound of stifled laugh)

- *eraku* is the adverb form of *erai*, and *nattara* is a conditional ("if/when") form of *naru* ("become"), so *eraku nattara* = "if/when [you] become important." *Eraku naru* refers to attaining high(er) rank within an organization or in society at large.
- *oshimai* means "the end/that's all/that's that."
- *su* is a contraction of *desu* ("is/are")

Self-important

Kataoka has a habit of flicking his cigarette butts on the ground. Unbeknownst to him, the fire department is conducting a surprise inspection of his office building, and one of the officials has just caught him in the act. Kataoka doesn't take kindly to the official's haranguing.

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Kataoka: えらそーに…
Erasō ni . . .
self-importantly
"In a self-important manner."
"Where do you get off?" (PL2)

Kataoka: なん　なん　だ、あんたら?
Nan　na n　da,　antara?
what (explan) are　you-(plur.)
"What are you guys?"
"Who do you think you are, anyway?" (PL2)

Fireman: 消防署　　の　者　だ!!
Shōbōsho　no mono　da!
fire department of person is/are
"We're from the fire department!" (PL2)

- *anta* is a more casual/informal *anata* ("you"), and can carry a derogatory/patronizing tone; *-ra* is an abrupt suffix that makes nouns and pronouns referring to people (and a few other special cases) into plurals.

The stem of an adjective plus the ending *-so* means "looks like it is/appears to be," so *erasō* = "looks/appears important." But its adverb form, *erasō ni*, is most commonly used when accusing someone of trying to seem more important than he is, or if he really is important, of throwing his weight around.

Clever

Norimaki Arale is getting a tour of the different clubs she could join at school. Track and field is next.

© Toriyama Akira / *Dr Slump* Shueisha

Instructor: 則巻さん　　ジャンプ　　はとくい?
Norimaki-san,　janpu　　wa tokui?
(name-hon.)　jump/jumping as for forte
"Ms. Norimaki, is the jump what you're good at?" (PL2)

Norimaki: 少年ジャンプ?
Shonen Janpu?
(magazine name)
"Shōnen Jump?" (PL2)

Friend: えらい、えらい。
Erai,　erai.
admirable　admirable
"Witty. Witty."
"Good one, good one!" (PL2)

- *janpu*, from the English "jump," is used in Japanese to refer to the high jump.
- *tokui* here means "forte/strong point."
- *Shonen Janpu* (lit., "Boy's Jump") is the name of a popular manga magazine
- although Norimaki's name, アラレ, would normally be romanized as Arare, the author of this manga prefers the spelling "Arale."

Erai is often used to compliment someone on coming up with a clever solution, witty joke, or insightful observation.

Mighty (1)

Miyamoto, pictured on the lower left, is getting all kinds of unwanted advice about his love life from his two friends, much to the amusement of the other patrons in the bar. The good-natured heckling becomes too much for Miyamoto, however, and he yells at everyone to shut up, leaving the bar in stunned silence. His friend Tajima tries to clear the air.

© Arai Hideki / *Miyamoto-kun kara Kimi e*, Kodansha

"Sound" FX: しん...
Shin . . .
(effect of silence spreading throughout room)

Tajima: はい、えらい すんまへん。酔うとります んや
Hai, erai sunmahen. Yōtorimasu n ya.
yes very sorry is drunk (explan.)
"Uhh, right. I'm terribly sorry. He's drunk." (PL2-Kansai)

Tajima (to Miyamoto): だーほ
Dāho.
idiot/fool
"You blockhead!" (PL1)

- *hai*, literally "yes," is here being used as a hesitation/pause word, as he momentarily considers what to say.
- *sunmahen* is a dialect variation of *summasen* ("I am/we are sorry").
- *yōtorimasu* is a dialect contraction of *yotte orimasu*, the PL4 humble form of *yotte iru* ("is drunk"), from *you* ("get drunk").
- *n ya* is Kansai dialect for explanatory *n da* ("it's that . . .").
- *dāho* appears to be a contraction of *do-aho*, an emphatic prefix with a derogatory feeling plus *aho* ("idiot/fool/blockhead").

Using *erai* as an emphasizer can be considered dialect, and it's heard a great deal more in western Japan than from Tokyo northward. Standard Japanese speakers sometimes use the adverb form of the word, *eraku*, in the same way, but they're still more likely to choose an entirely different word for emphasis, such as *sugoi* (凄い) or *sugoku* (凄く), *totemo* (とても), *hontō ni* (本当に), *zubun* (ずいぶん), *taihen* (大変), or *hidoku* (ひどく).

Mighty (2)

Miyamoto has not seen or heard from Misako—a woman he met at a train station and had only just started dating—in almost a week, and he is assuming the worst. His friend, who knows the whole story, has just found him staring off into space outside the train station.

© Arai Hideki / *Miyamoto-kun kara Kimi e*, Kodansha

Miyamoto: なんか... 捨てられちゃった みたい ですよ
Nanka . . . suterarechatta mitai desu yo.
vaguely abandoned-(regret) it seems (emph.)
"It sorta looks like I've been dumped." (PL2)

Koda: ほう、そらあ えらい はやかった やないか
Hō, sorā erai hayakatta ya nai ka.
(exclam.) that very was fast was it not?
"Wow, that was mighty fast, wasn't it?"
"Wow, that sure was fast!" (PL2-K)

- *suterarechatta* is a contraction of *suterarete shimatta*, from *suterareru*, the passive form of *suteru* ("throw away/abandon"), and *-te shimau*, which indicates the action was unwanted/cause for regret.
- *sora* is a contraction of *sore wa* ("as for that").
- *ya nai ka* is dialect for *ja nai ka* or *de wa nai ka* ("is it not?"). The question is purely rhetorical.

Terrible

This farming family is being sued for all they are worth by a man who was rear-ended by the son, pictured in the middle. They had already taken out one loan to pay for the man's hospital care and car repair, so when he demanded more for alleged medical complications, the husband planned to say nobody would give them another loan. The wife, however, went ahead and took out the loan without asking the husband, who is now furious.

© Aoki Yūji/ *Naniwa Kin'yūdō*, Kodansha

Wife: すみません。えらい　こと　してしもて...
Sumimasen. Erai koto shite shimote...
sorry terrible thing/action did-(regret)
"I'm so sorry. I have done a terrible thing."
"I'm so sorry. I made a terrible mistake." (PL2)

Wife: ウウウ...
U, u, u...
(sound of sobbing)

- *koto* (lit., "thing") here refers to "an action."
- *shite shimote* is dialect for *shite shimatte*, the *-te* forms of *suru* and *shimau*. *Shimau* after the *-te* form of a verb can indicate regret that the action took place.

Terrible

Dr. Slump invented a time machine and as a test he sent Arale, his robot-child invention, 500 years into the past. After she left, he realized that he forgot to tell her to come back right away. She's been gone for hours now and he's terrified at the possibilities.

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Dr. Slump: 本格的に　/ えらい　こっちゃ!!
Honkaku-teki ni / erai kotcha!!
genuinely / terrible thing/situation-is
"This is a truly terrible situation."
"This is really a mess!" (PL2)

- *honkaku-teki* means "[is] genuine/in earnest/the real thing" and adding *ni* makes it an adverb: "genuinely/truly."
- *kotcha* is a dialect/slang equivalent of *koto da*; *koto* here means "situation," so ~ *koto da* = "it is a ~ situation."

J-Rap

by William Marsh

Maybe it's me, but when first I heard that we share this planet with something called ***J-rappu*** (Jラップ, "Japanese rap"), I had to laugh. It's not that I'm easily fazed: you could inform me that the scriptwriter of the legendary "missing bikini bottom" episode of *Baywatch* just won the Nobel Prize for Literature, and all I'd do is shrug and mutter ***naruhodo*** ("Exactly . . . what else would you expect?"). Whisper to me of Jamaican bobsled teams, Australian aristocracy, French modesty –I won't bat an eye; I've seen it all.

But Japanese rap?

It's out there, as they say on "The X-Files." A front-page story in the *Asahi Shimbun*, straining to be hip and relevant by serving up a local rapper for the kiddies, blithely defines rap as ***Jamaika-jikomi no uta to shaberi*** (ジャマイカ仕込みの歌としゃべり), or "song and patter fused in the Jamaican way." Like them or not, those six words aptly capture why a culture enthralled by musical amateurism and blooper-laden comic ad lib would fall for an idiom where babble stripped of melodic intent is lashed by a beat like the click of a broken record.

What I find most likable in J-rap seems to derive from the monologues in ***rakugo*** (落語), the comedic storytelling which is so keenly observant of the neighbors but also points its stick-pin at the self. J-rap at its most deadly invokes memories of passionate Japanese balladeers who seem to forget, from bar to bar, which tune out of the five they know they happen to be singing at the moment or which rhythm they're strumming to accompany it. When spontaneity this serenely "unplugged" has an arsenal of techno-toys at its disposal, the results recall Mark Twain's comment about an opera he'd just left—that he hadn't heard a sound like that since the orphanage burnt down.

EAST END x YURI, the cutest and most visible of the J-rap groups, has obligingly written a kind of manifesto for what they do. Called "Throw Ya Hands," it asks the listeners, ***"Koko wa doko ka kimi shitten no?"*** (ここはどこか君知ってんの, "Do you know where this is?") and answers its own question: ***"Tada no otto chippoke na shimaguni ja nai yo"*** (ただのおっとちっぽけな島国じゃないよ, "Not just some puny little island nation"). After pointing out that Japan, as described by Marco Polo, is the country of golden dreams where the sun rises at the eastern tip of the world, "Throw Ya Hands" demands: ***"Ittai jibun te dare? . . . / Moshika shite itsu demo tanin no mane? / Wannabe's ja sabishii. Wasurenaide ikō ka, Yamato damashii / Funky Grammar Kyokutō-ryū HIP HOP"*** (いったい自分て誰?. . . /もしかしていつでも他人のマネ/Wannabe's じゃさびしい、忘れないでいこうか、大和魂/Funky Grammar 極東流 HIP HOP, "Do you know who you are? . . . / Might it be that you're imitating strangers all the time? / It's sad to be a wannabe; let's try not to forget it, huh? –the Yamato spirit / Funky Grammar Far East-style HIP HOP").

Just how far away from home a Japanese group has to travel to convince themselves that it's OK to be Japanese comes through loud and clear despite (or rather, because of) the corny nationalism. EAST END x YURI can be devastatingly ironic about its own daily scene: hedonistic girls, portable phone in one hand, mirror in the other, pursued by wimpy, uncertain boys more worried about coming off badly than getting lucky. It figures that the trio's funniest tune revolves around the overworked phrase ***Ma, ii ka*** ("Well, what the hell" or "Um, I guess it's OK with me"), which conveys the paralyzed ambivalence about everything that is second nature to trampled Tokyo teens.

The pleasure EAST END x YURI takes in riffing off local slang is contagious. They built their biggest single ("DA.YO.NE.") around the interrogative that punctuates nearly every sentence in Kantō teen chat; the Kansai promptly responded with "SO.YA.NA." by WEST END x YUKI, and we've since seen the likes of "DA.BE.SA." (Tōhoku), "DA.GA.NE." (Chūbu), and "SO.TA.I." (Kyushū), not to mention a compilation of knockoffs from all over Asia.

Having spent years on 192nd Street in Manhattan, where those of my neighbors who weren't cranking up Public Enemy were blasting out salsa, I figured even J-rap would manufacture anthems about "offing the pigs." A rapper who calls himself Rankin Takushi has riffed on nuclear power (***"Hōsha-nō kowai / Dare mo sabetsu shinai,"*** 放射能怖い/だれも差別しない, which might be rendered "Radiation's scary / It don't care if you're Moe, Curly, or Larry") and has just released an anti-***ijime*** ("anti-bullying") video, but righteous genocide doesn't seem to be his thing. I guess we'll have to wait until the folks at Aum Supreme Truth pick up on J-rap. ❖

William Marsh is a freelance writer based in Tokyo.

vocabulary summary

From *Kasai no Hito*, p. 25

残る	*nokoru*	remain/be left over
世紀	*seiki*	century
生き残り	*ikinokori*	survivor/holdover
化石	*kaseki*	fossil
哀れむ	*awaremu*	pity/take pity on
眺める	*nagameru*	gaze at/stare at
腹立たしい	*haradatashii*	irritating/exasperating
笑顔	*egao*	smiling face/smile
楽しむ	*tanoshimu*	enjoy
気付く	*kizuku*	realize/become aware of
親切な	*shinsetsu na*	kind
おかしい	*okashii*	strange/peculiar
変	*hen*	strange/funny/odd
つき合う	*tsukiau*	socialize/consort with
充分	*jūbun*	plenty/fully/enough
ひどい	*hidoi*	terrible
せい	*sei*	consequence/result/effect
撤回する	*tekkai suru*	retract/take back
裁判官	*saiban-kan*	judge (*n.*)
なかなか	*nakanaka*	(not) easily/readily
離婚	*rikon*	divorce (*n.*)
部下	*buka*	subordinate (*n.*)
偏見	*henken*	prejudiced view
結婚	*kekkon*	marriage
相手	*aite*	counterpart
ケンカする	*kenka suru*	fight/quarrel (*v.*)
嘘つき	*usotsuki*	liar
苦しい	*kurushii*	difficult/painful
秘密	*himitsu*	secret (*n.*)
つもり	*tsumori*	assumption
一人ぼっち	*hitoribotchi*	all alone
幸せな	*shiawase na*	happy
妙な	*myō na*	strange/odd
会う	*au*	meet (*v.*)
夫婦喧嘩	*fūfu-genka*	marital spat
はめ	*hame*	plight/fix
早速	*sassoku*	right away/already
前任地	*zenninchi*	previous post
わだかまり	*wadakamari*	antagonism/bad feelings
幸運	*kōun*	good fortune
予定	*yotei*	plan/schedule (*n.*)

From *Manga Shorts*, p. 38

見習う	*minarau*	imitate
カジュアルな	*kajuaru na*	casual
火災訓練	*kasai kunren*	fire drill
多国籍	*takokuseki*	multinational
はやる	*hayaru*	flourish (*v.*)
双眼鏡	*sōgankyō*	binoculars
たくましい	*takumashii*	strong/robust/stalwart

From *Hashutsujo*, p. 73

小学生	*shogakusei*	primary school student
巻	*maki*	scroll/episode
緊急	*kinkyū*	urgent/emergency
犯人	*hannin*	criminal
競馬	*keiba*	horse racing
馬	*uma*	horse
道	*michi*	road
乱暴な	*ranbo na*	rough
迷う	*mayou*	become puzzled/lost
勝手に	*katte ni*	on (one's) own/without asking
携帯電話	*keitai denwa*	cellular phone
相談する	*sōdan suru*	consult (*v.*)
電子手帳	*denshi techō*	electronic notebook
ビジネスマン	*bijinesuman*	businessman
下がる	*sagaru*	fall/drop/go down
装備する	*sōbi suru*	equip (with)
資料	*shuryō*	data/information
回復	*kaifuku*	recovery/restoration
見とおし	*mitōshi*	outlook
ひきしめる	*hikishimeru*	tighten/brace (oneself)
現在地	*genzaichi*	present location
派出所	*hashutsujo*	police box/branch office
お巡りさん	*omawari-san*	policeman
移動する	*idō suru*	move/travel
埋める	*umeru*	bury/fill in
電池	*denchi*	battery
充電する	*jūden suru*	recharge battery
かまう	*kamau*	mind/care about
親子	*oyako*	parent and child
メカ	*meka*	machinery
間に合う	*maniau*	be on time
遅れる	*okureru*	become late
国語	*kokugo*	national language/Japanese
算数	*sansu*	math
採点する	*saiten suru*	mark/score (*v.*)
送り返す	*okurikaesu*	send back/return
待機する	*taiki suru*	stand by/await
通信教育	*tsūshin kyōiku*	correspondence course
ソロバン	*soroban*	abacus
バカな	*baka na*	idiotic/foolish
キーボード	*kiibodo*	keyboard
正しい	*tadashii*	proper/correct/right
あたたかみ	*atatakami*	warmth
玉	*tama*	bead (*n.*)
文字	*moji*	letter/character
たて笛	*tatebue*	recorder (musical instrument)
最新	*saishin*	newest
音声	*onsei*	sound (*n.*)
天気予報	*tenki yoho*	weather forecast
リモコン	*rimokon*	remote control
電話番号	*denwa bango*	phone number
ヘビ使い	*hebitsukai*	snake charmer
三脚	*sankyaku*	tripod
機能	*kinō*	function/feature (*n.*)
重要な	*jūyō na*	important
誘拐犯	*yūkai-han*	kidnapper
逃げる	*nigeru*	flee
信号弾	*shingo-dan*	flare (*n.*)
脈拍	*myakuhaku*	pulse (*n.*)
測定する	*sokutei suru*	measure (*v.*)
生きぬく	*ikinuku*	survive
まわる	*mawaru*	go around
不気味な	*bukimi na*	weird

The Vocabulary Summary is taken from material appearing in this issue of Mangajin. *It's not always possible to give the complete range of meanings for a word in this limited space, so our "definitions" are based on the usage of the word in a particular story.*

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